DOWN WITH
CRIME
NOV. NO.
10¢
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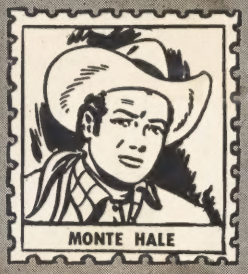
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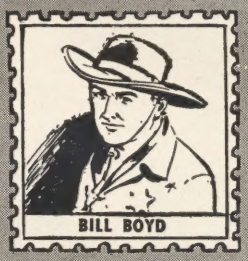
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# The HOUDINI of CRIME

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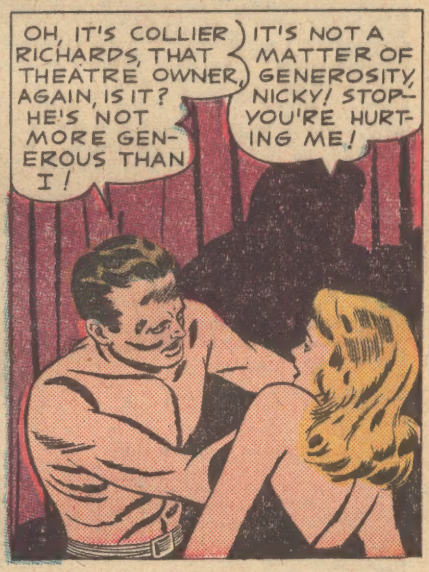
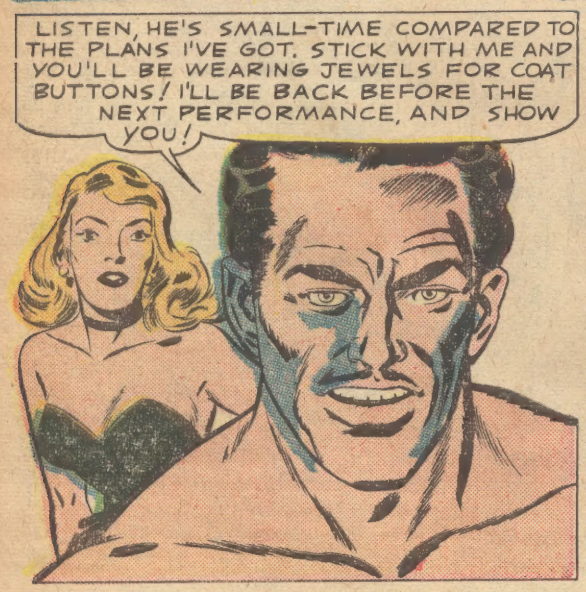
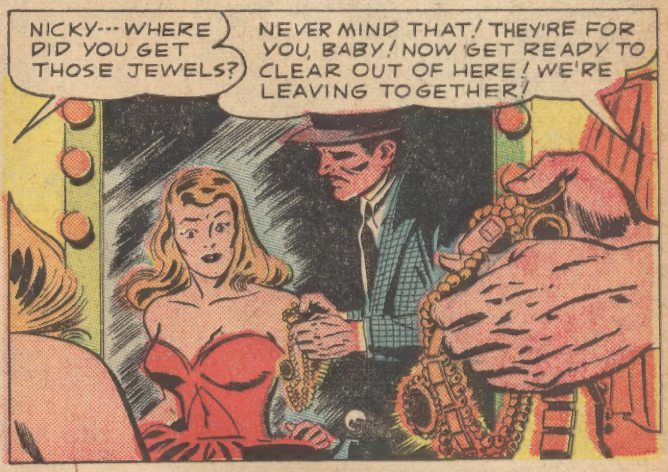
ESCAPE ARTIST! THE WORDS RESOUNDED IN HIS FEVER HEIGHTENED BRAIN, AS FLEETINGLY HE RECALLED THE ADULATION OF HIS LAST AUDIENCE AND THE INCIDENT THAT LED TO THIS CRITICAL MOMENT.



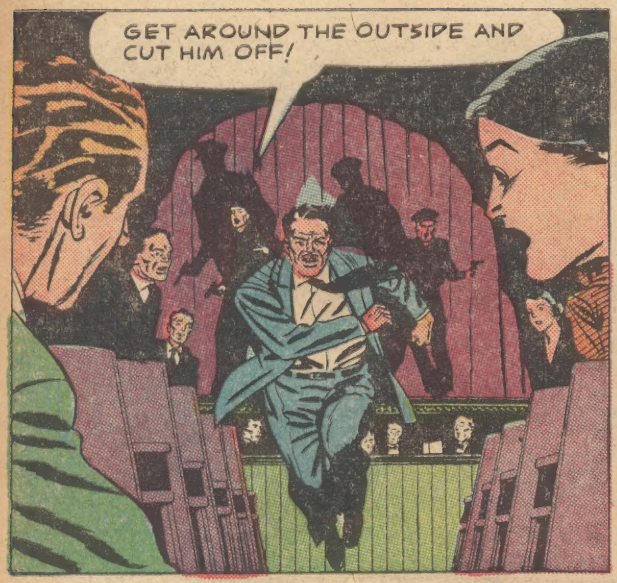

BURNING WITH A FIERCE RESENTMENT, THE BRAGGING, ARROGANT PERFORMER TOOK DESPERATE MEASURES ONLY AN HOUR LATER.

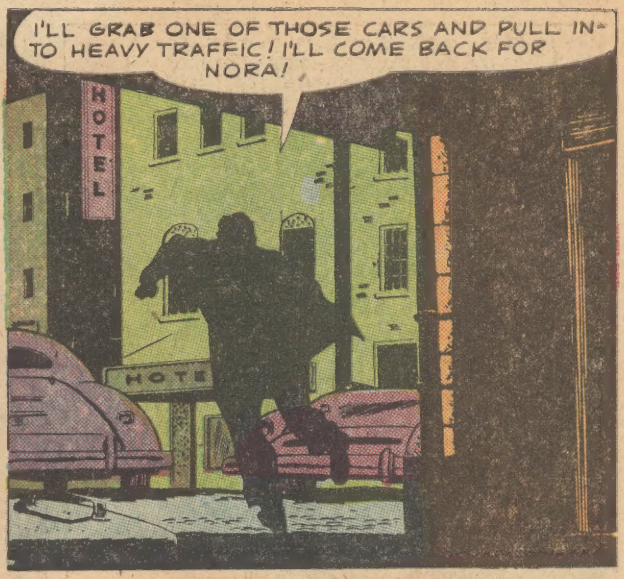
HE GRABBED THE GLITTERING GEMS! AND WITH THE STEALTH AND AGILITY OF A CAT, HE BOUNDED OUT THE BACK DOOR INTO THE THEATRE, EVEN AS A CRY OF ALARM WENT OUT! THEN---



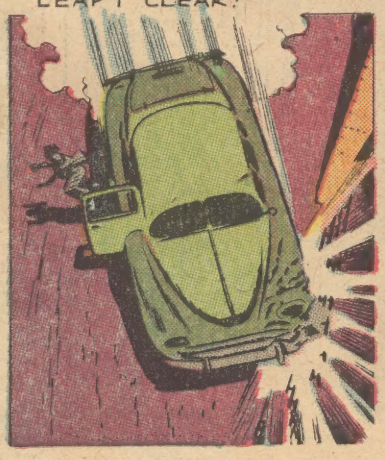
THE HATE-CRAZED PERFORMER WOULD NOT BE THWARTED! HIS HAND GRASPED HARD METAL, AND---

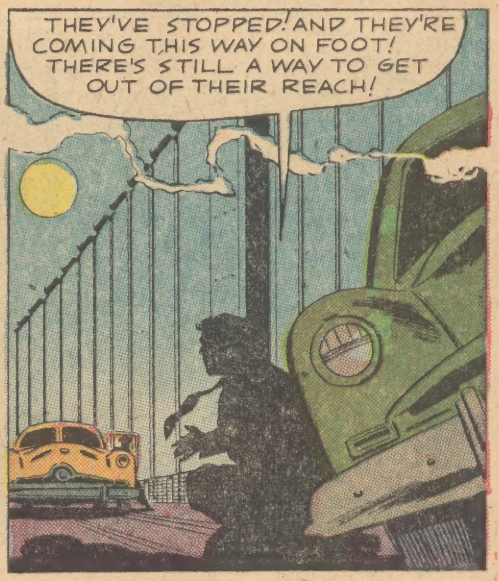
THE LAW CLOSE ON HIS TRAIL, DESARRO ABANDONED THE SOBBING TREMBLING NORA AND RAN ACROSS THE STAGE! THEN, HE LEAPT!



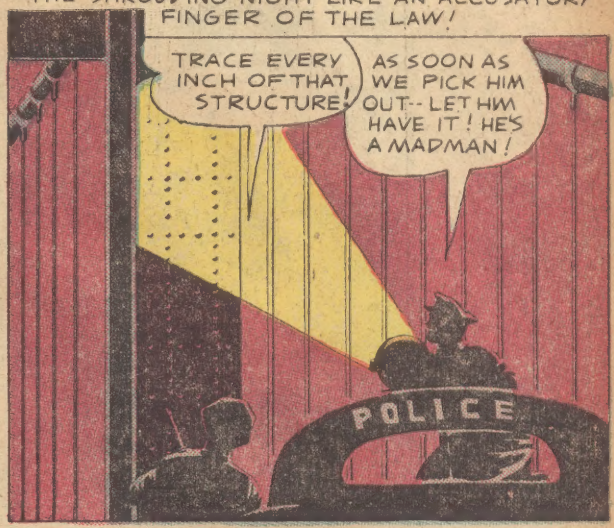

A DEFT MANIPULATION OF HIS FINGERS AND THE IGNITION WAS ON! THE HEAVY TRAFFIC WAS A MOMENTARY SHIELD-- BUT THEN THE CHASE WAS ON! NOW, SUDDENLY-AS A STRUCTURE LOOMED AHEAD-- DESARRO'S MIND SNAPPED BACK TO THE HAZARDOUS PRESENT!



BREATHING HEAVILY, HIS EYES CLOUDED WITH PANIC--- DESARRO MOVED WITH THE CUNNING OF A CORNERED RAT. DE-FYING GRAVITY, HE START-ED UP THE BARE SURFACE OF THE BRIDGE STRUC-TURE!

SECONDS LATER, A LIGHT BEAM PIERCED THE SHROUDING NIGHT LIKE AN ACCUSATORY FINGER OF THE LAW!

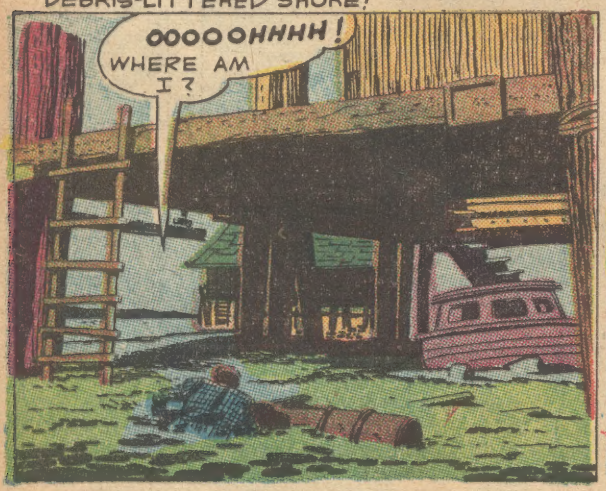


HE GRABBED OUT IN DES-PERATION AND HIS FINGERS CLUTCHED THE COLD, UNYIELD-ING STEEL FRAME-WORK! BUT HIS FLESH **WAS** YIELDING, AND HE STRAINED WITH EVERY LAST RE-SOURCE TO RETAIN HIS PER-ILOUS HOLD.

BUT EVEN AS HE HURTLED THROUGH SPACE - WITH A SUPER-HUMAN EFFORT HE MANAGED TO CURVE HIS BODY AND CUP HIS EARS AGAINST THE FIERCE PRESSURE! THE YEARS OF DEATH-DEFYING STUNTING HAD INSTINCTIVELY COME INTO PLAY!

BLACKNESS VEILED HIS CONSCIOUSNESS FOR A FRACTIONAL INSTANT! BUT AS HIS PLUMMETING BODY STRUCK THE WATER WITH A BONE-SHATTERING IMPACT, HIS SENSES HAD ALERTED HIM.

BUT AS THE THICK MIST OF EARLY MORNING DISPERSED OVER THE RIVER HOURS LATER-- A BATTERED FIGURE ROUSED ITSELF ON THE DEBRIS-LITTERED SHORE!



HE DRAGGED HIMSELF FORWARD! AND THE AGONY OF HIS EFFORT WAS EXCRUCIATING, KNIFING EACH NERVE WITH PAIN!

T-THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH MY BACK, TOO! I-I'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING! I CAN'T LAST MUCH LONGER LIKE THIS!

THAT BARGE! IF ONLY I COULD MAKE IT TO THERE!

FOR A TORTUROUS HOUR AND A HALF DESARRO MOVED LIKE AN EARTHWORM ACROSS THE FIFTY YARDS TO THE BARGE. AND AT LAST---

MAN-YOU'RE BADLY HURT! I'LL GET THE POLICE AND AN AMBULANCE.

NO-NO! I DON'T WANT THEM!

YOU'VE GOT TO HAVE THEM! YOU'LL DIE!

DON'T LEAVE THIS CABIN!

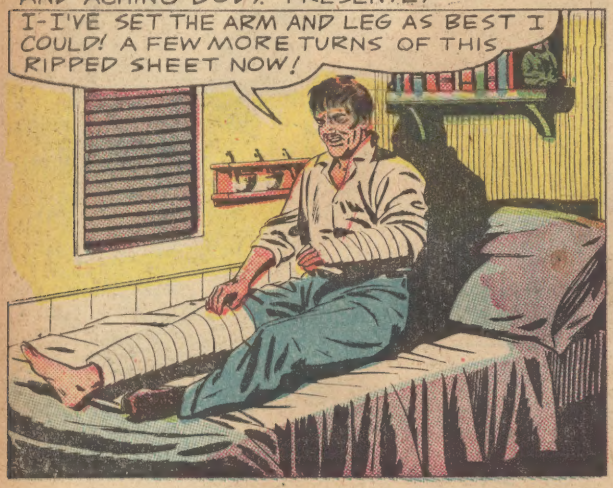
COME BACK, I SAY! COME BACK!

WITH A COLD, PRIMITIVE BESTIALITY THE BATTERED FUGITIVE FLUNG THE BLADE! IT WAS FIENDISHLY ACCURATE!

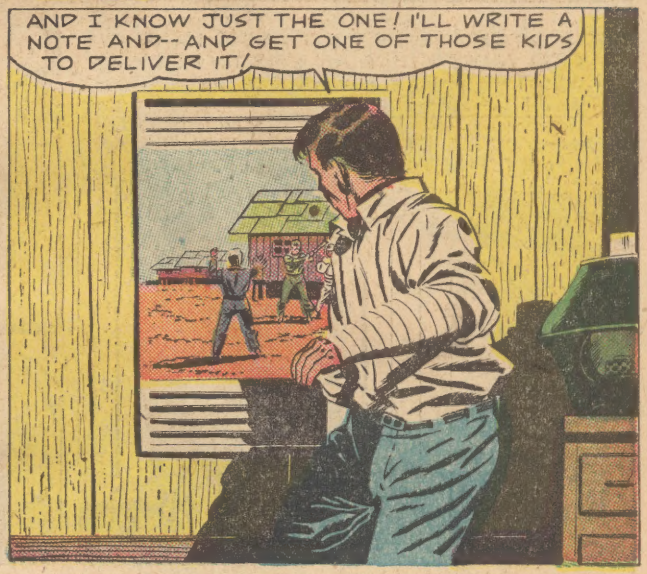
YAHHHH!

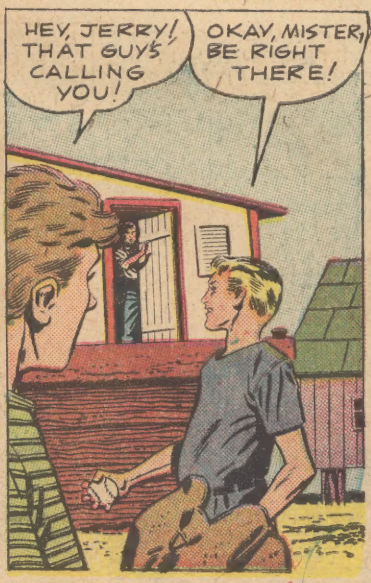
NOW I'VE GOT TO CARE FOR MYSELF! I-I CAN'T STAND THE PAIN —MUCH LONGER!

THE URGE FOR SELF-PRESERVATION WAS STRONG--- INCREDIBLY STRONG! HIS TWISTED, INGENIOUS MIND MINISTERED TO HIS CRUSHED AND ACHING BODY. PRESENTLY---



HE SANK INTO MERCIFUL UNCONSCIOUSNESS. AND FOR LONG HOURS, HE LAY WRITHING DELIRIOUSLY UPON THE HARD BUNK. WHEN HE OPENED HIS EYES ---





AN HOUR WENT BY- AND THEN ANOTHER, WITH NO RESPONSE TO HIS MESSAGE! THEN SUDDENLY- A BIG, HULKING FIGURE LOOMED IN THE DOORWAY!

NICKY! W-WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOU?

NOT NICKY ANY MORE— SINCE OUR CARNY DAYS TOGETHER, BURT! DESARRO NOW! I'M BADLY HURT! I'VE GOT TO GET SOME DRUGS!-- WITHOUT A PRESCRIPTION! LOTS OF PENICILLIN OR THE MYCIN DRUGS!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN? HOW WOULD I DO THAT?

BREAK INTO SOME PHARMACY AND GET IT!

ROBBERY?, NO-I WONT DO THAT!

DON'T **NO** ME, WHAT DO YOU THINK I CALLED **YOU** FOR? DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN THAT CRAZY TEMPER OF YOURS GOT THE BEST OF YOU AT THE CARNY AND YOU KILLED THAT MAN! I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO KNOWS!

BUT I'M A MARRIED MAN, NOW-- I SETTLED DOWN! WE HAVE A KID OF OUR OWN!

YOU GET ME THOSE DRUGS, OR I'LL GET YOU NABBED FOR MURDER!

OKAY--I'LL GET YOU THE DRUGS

AND SO THE TROUBLED AND BEWILDERED BURT KASHUCK BROUGHT DESARRO THE DRUGS! STILL ACTING UNDER THREAT, HE BROUGHT HIM FOOD AND TENDED HIM FOR SEVERAL WEEKS. DESARRO RECOVERED GRADUALLY, BUT HE WAS A BENT AND MISSHAPEN MAN. ONE NIGHT--

WELL-I'LL SOON HAVE THIS SPLINT OFF MY LEG! THEY COULDN'T KILL ME OFF AFTER ALL! NOW I GOT TO HAVE A WAY TO GET ME SOME REAL DOUGH! I'M FINISHED FOR THE STAGE!

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

YOU SOLVED THAT FOR ME! WHEN YOU TOLD ME HOW EASY IT WAS TO LIFT THOSE ANTI-BIOTICS! THOSE DRUGS ARE WORTH A FORTUNE IF WE CAN GET ENOUGH OF THEM! IT'S A NEW RACKET!

WITH HIS EVIL TENTACLES SUNK VICIOUSLY DEEP, DESARRO BENT BURT KASHUK TO HIS WILL. HE HAD HIM STEAL A TRUCK, AND SEVERAL WEEKS LATER, IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT---

WE'LL GET CAUGHT FOR SURE!

NOT THE WAY I PLANNED THIS! THIS IS A NEAT HAUL! ON THE BLACK MARKET IN EUROPE THIS PENICILLIN OUGHT TO GET A SMALL FORTUNE! AND THERE ARE WAYS TO GET IT THERE!

LOADING PLATFORM

OKAY-LET'S CLEAR OUT OF HERE! THIS IS A START! JUST A START!

WAREHOUSE

AND FROM THEN ON DESARRO STRUCK FAST AND HARD! WORD OF HIS RACKET SPREAD IN UNDERWORLD CHANNELS, AND SOON-A DOZEN HARDENED CRIMINALS JOINED HIM. ONE OF THEIR HAULS WAS IN A LARGE PHARMACEUTICAL LABORATORY!

THIS IS OUR BIGGEST JOB YET! AND IT'S GOT TO COME OFF RIGHT!

WHAT IS THIS STUFF ANYWAY? THIS JOINT SMELLS LIKE AN EMBALMER'S!

THIS IS A NEW WONDER DRUG! REAL MIRACLE STUFF, THEY SAY--- BUT VERY SLOW TO CULTURE! AND WORTH A FORTUNE!

AND THIS IS THE ONLY JOINT THAT MAKES IT! WE OUGHT TO CLEAN OUT THE WHOLE SUPPLY!

HEY-- WHO'S DOWN THERE? WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

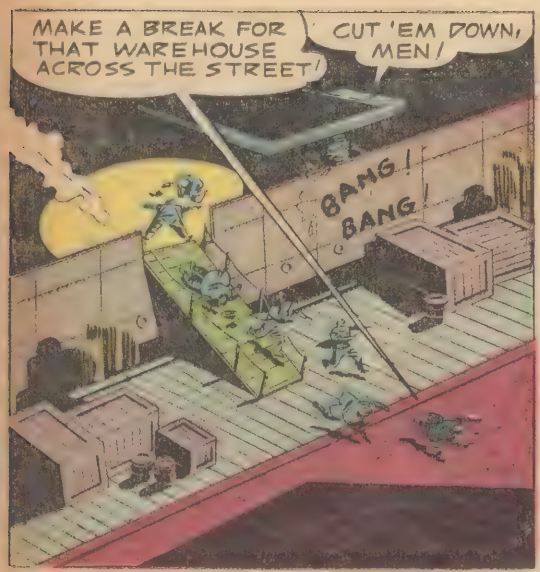
THE WATCHMAN!

YOU FOOL! THAT SHOT WILL AROUSE THE GUARDS IN FRONT OF THIS PLACE!

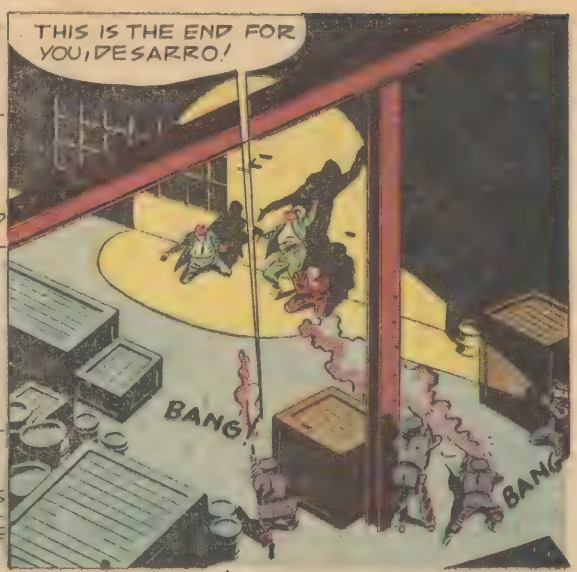
DESARRO'S COLD-BLOODED SADISM SEEMED ONLY TO INTENSIFY IT'S MANIACAL URGE!

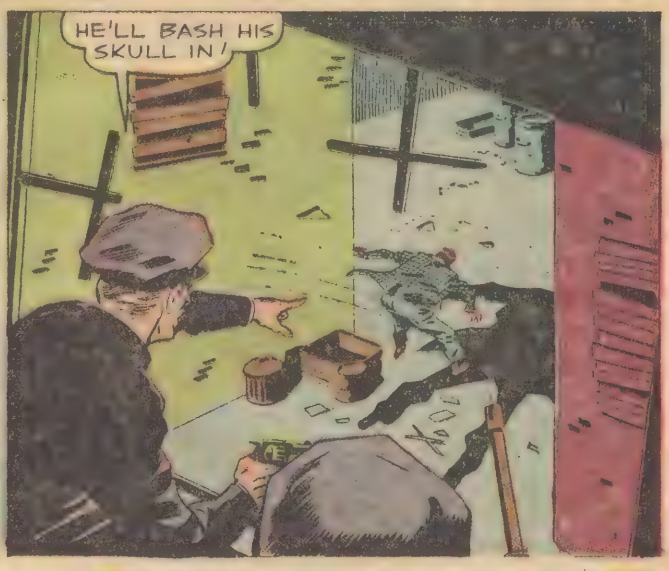
AS HIS DRUG RAIDS REACHED ALARMING PROPORTIONS, THE AUTHORITIES GREW CONCERNED ABOUT PUBLIC HEALTH! ON THE EVE OF ANOTHER PLANNED ROBBERY..

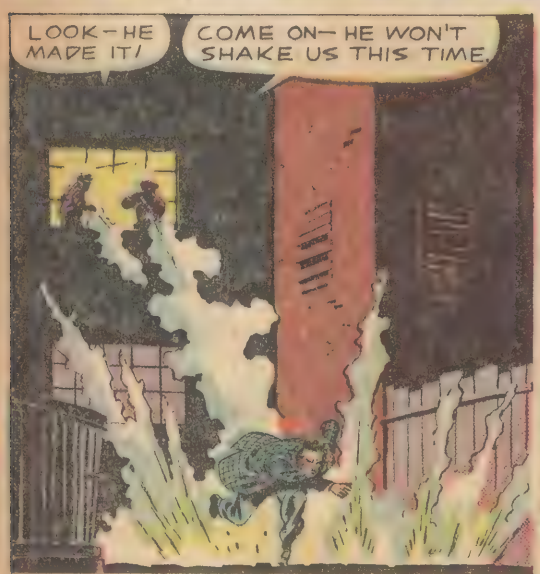
BUT DESARRO'S CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT DESTINED TO BECOME A LAST MEMORIAL OF HIS INFAMY! AS THEY BOARDED THE WAITING VESSEL--



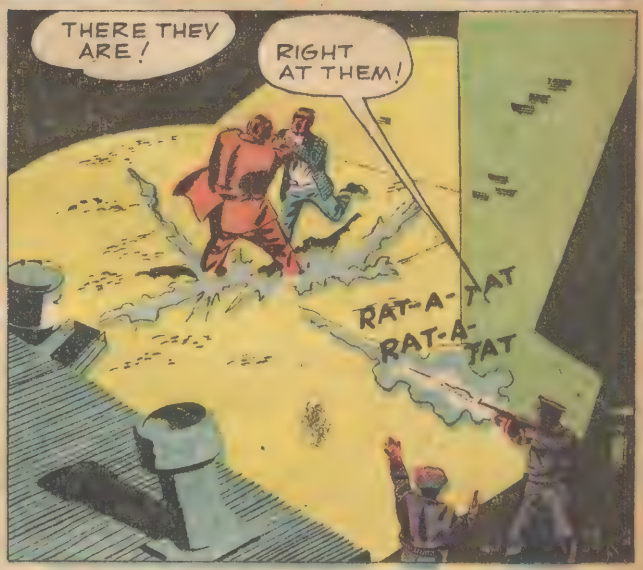

UNDER THE SCATHING FIRE OF THE POLICE WEAPONS, DESARRO AND HIS VICIOUS MOB FLED THE FATAL AMBUSH! BUT THE FORCES OF THE LAW ADVANCED WITH UNFLINCHING DETERMINATION! AT LAST--THE GANGSTERS WERE CORNERED LIKE RATS IN A TRAP!






THE MISSHAPEN ESCAPE ARTIST FLED AS FAST AND AS FAR AS HE COULD, HEADING FOR THE RENDEZVOUS THAT WAS TO BE THE OLD BARGE! BUT BEFORE HIM HE SAW A HUGE FORMIDABLE SILHOUETTE APPROACHING. HE RECOGNIZED---

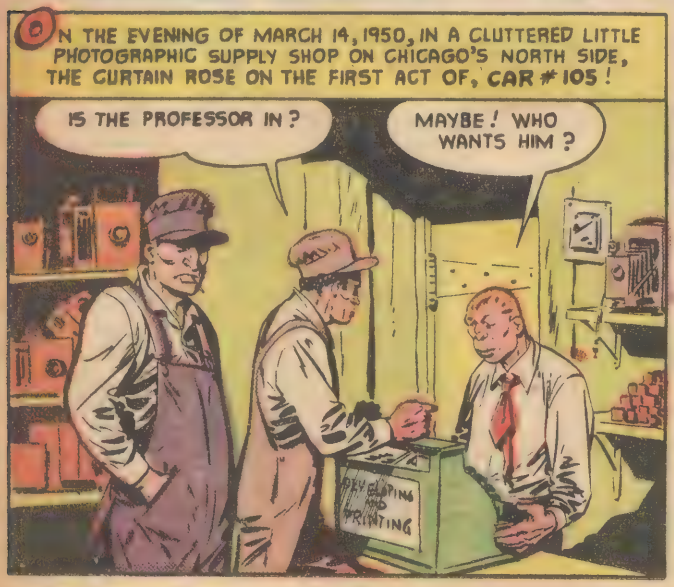


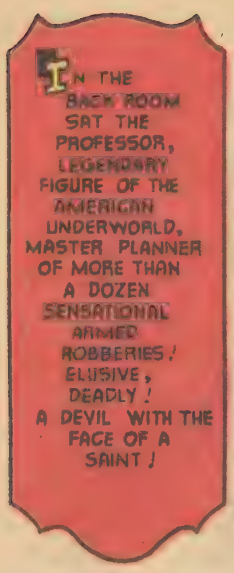
BULLET-RIDDLED AND LIFELESS, STRETCHED OUT ON THE DAMP COBBLE-STONES, NICKY TRI-SKIN-- OR DESARRO, THE HOUDINI OF CRIME, MET HIS INEVITABLE, VIOLENT END! FOR NO ONE CAN ESCAPE THE ALL-SEEING EYE, AND THE FAR-REACHING ARM OF THE LAW.

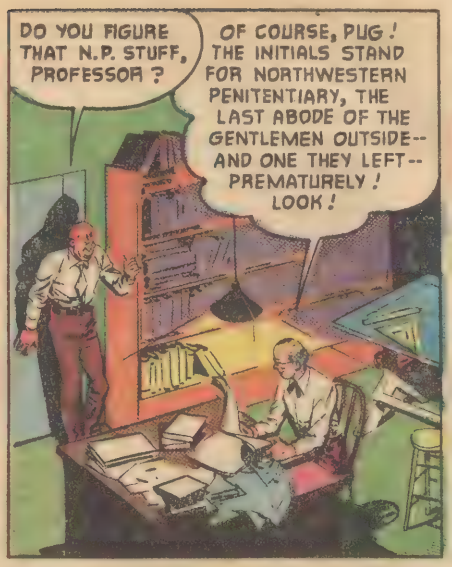
The train whistle's piercing shreik echoed in the empty, unheeding air as the churning metal hearse plunged to its doom at ... WHITE HORSE PASS! This is the unbelievable account of the infamous crime known on police records as ....

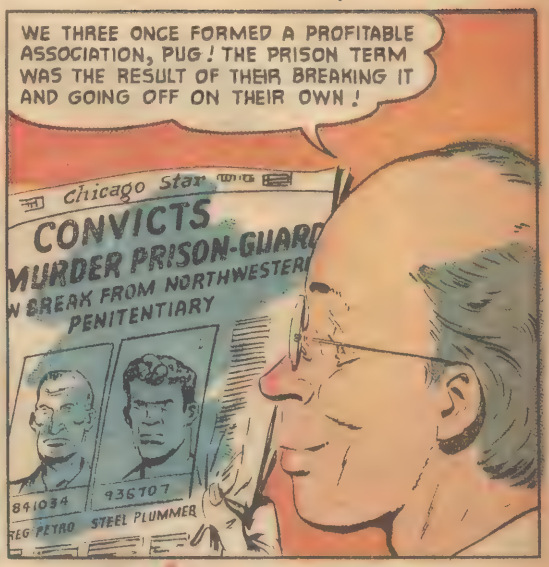
# EXPRESS CAR #105

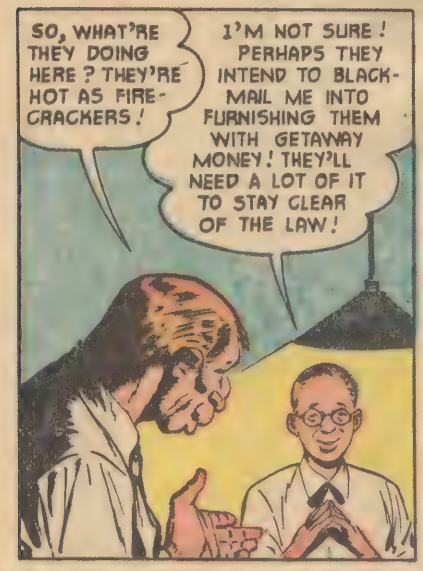




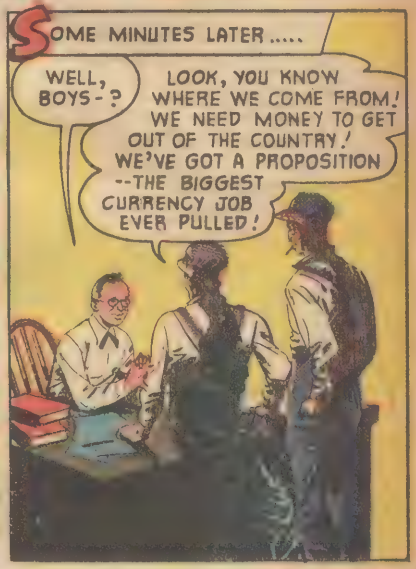

IN THE BACK ROOM SAT THE PROFESSOR, LEGENDARY FIGURE OF THE AMERICAN UNDERWORLD, MASTER PLANNER OF MORE THAN A DOZEN SENSATIONAL ARMED ROBBERIES! ELUSIVE, DEADLY! A DEVIL WITH THE FACE OF A SAINT!

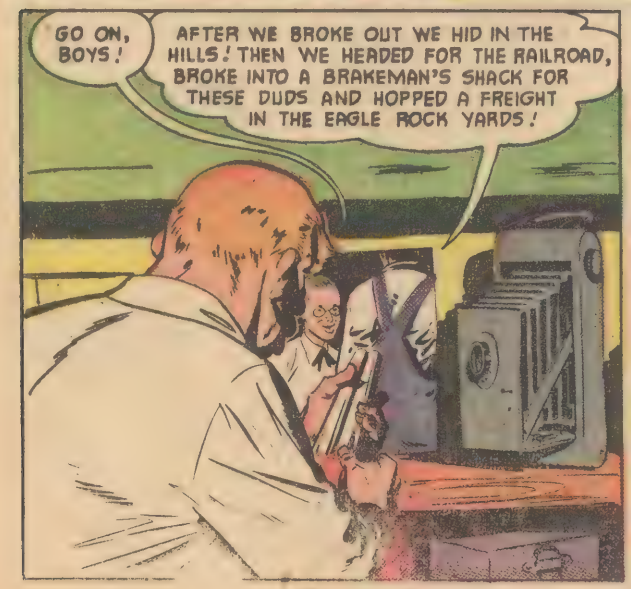

DO YOU FIGURE THAT N.P. STUFF, PROFESSOR?
OF COURSE, PUG! THE INITIALS STAND FOR NORTHWESTERN PENITENTIARY, THE LAST ABODE OF THE GENTLEMEN OUTSIDE--AND ONE THEY LEFT--PREMATURELY! LOOK!

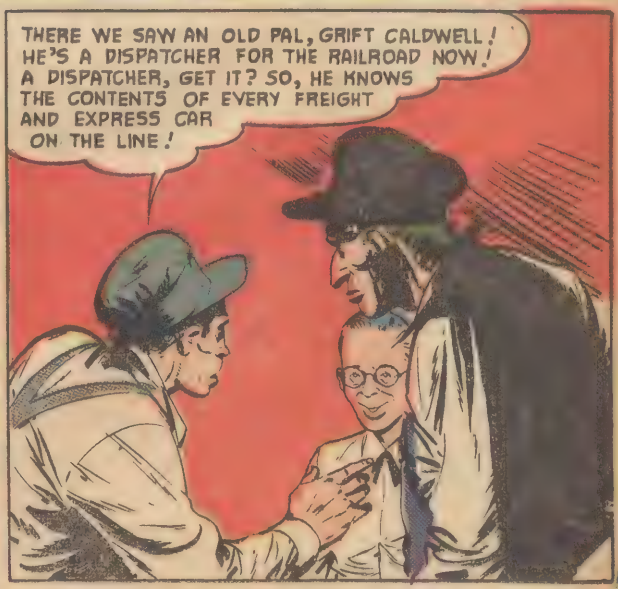

WE THREE ONCE FORMED A PROFITABLE ASSOCIATION, PUG! THE PRISON TERM WAS THE RESULT OF THEIR BREAKING IT AND GOING OFF ON THEIR OWN!
Chicago Star
CONVICTS
MURDER PRISON-GUARD
BREAK FROM NORTHWESTERN PENITENTIARY
841034
936707
STEEL PLUMMER


SO, WHAT'RE THEY DOING HERE? THEY'RE HOT AS FIRE-CRACKERS!
I'M NOT SURE! PERHAPS THEY INTEND TO BLACK-MAIL ME INTO FURNISHING THEM WITH GETAWAY MONEY! THEY'LL NEED A LOT OF IT TO STAY CLEAR OF THE LAW!

ARE YOU CRAZY?
JUST CURIOUS! TAKE THIS LITTLE MONSTER ALONG! AFTER YOU'VE SHOWN THE GENTLEMEN IN--COVER THEM FROM THE SHOP GUN-PORT!

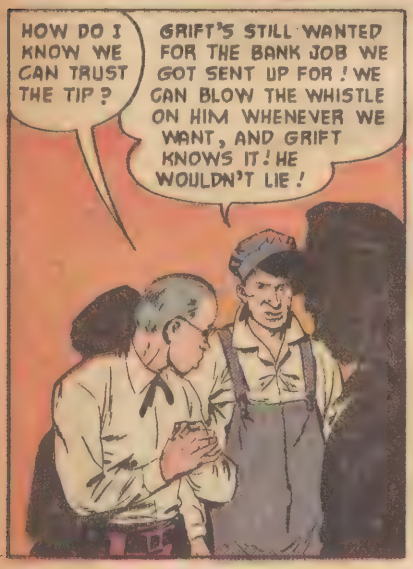

SOME MINUTES LATER.....
WELL, BOYS-?
LOOK, YOU KNOW WHERE WE COME FROM! WE NEED MONEY TO GET OUT OF THE COUNTRY! WE'VE GOT A PROPOSITION --THE BIGGEST CURRENCY JOB EVER PULLED!

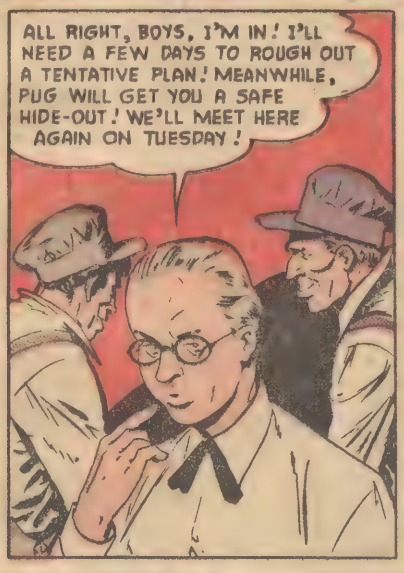

GO ON, BOYS!
AFTER WE BROKE OUT WE HID IN THE HILLS! THEN WE HEADED FOR THE RAILROAD, BROKE INTO A BRAKEMAN'S SHACK FOR THESE DUDS AND HOPPED A FREIGHT IN THE EAGLE ROCK YARDS!

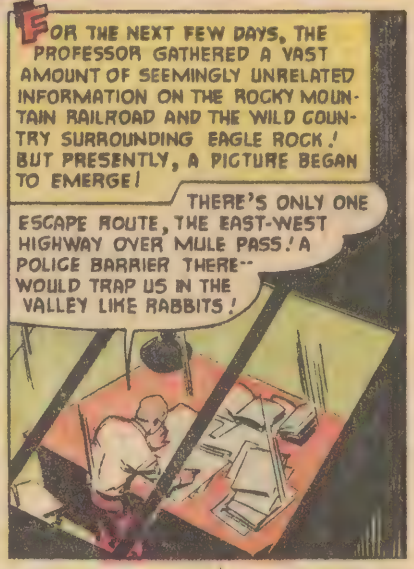

THERE WE SAW AN OLD PAL, GRIFT CALDWELL! HE'S A DISPATCHER FOR THE RAILROAD NOW! A DISPATCHER, GET IT? SO, HE KNOWS THE CONTENTS OF EVERY FREIGHT AND EXPRESS CAR ON THE LINE!

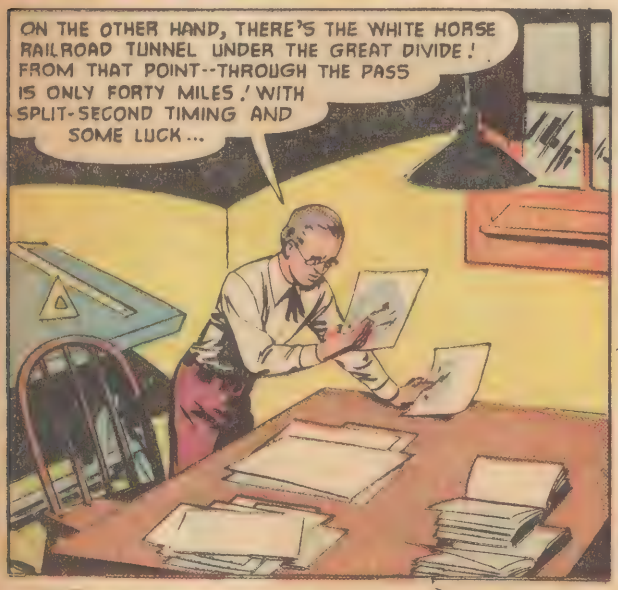
YOU KNOW I DON'T TOUCH TRAINS! BANKS, YES! ARMORED CARS, YES! TRAINS, NO!
EVEN FIVE MILLION DOLLARS WORTH OF TRAIN, PROFESSOR?

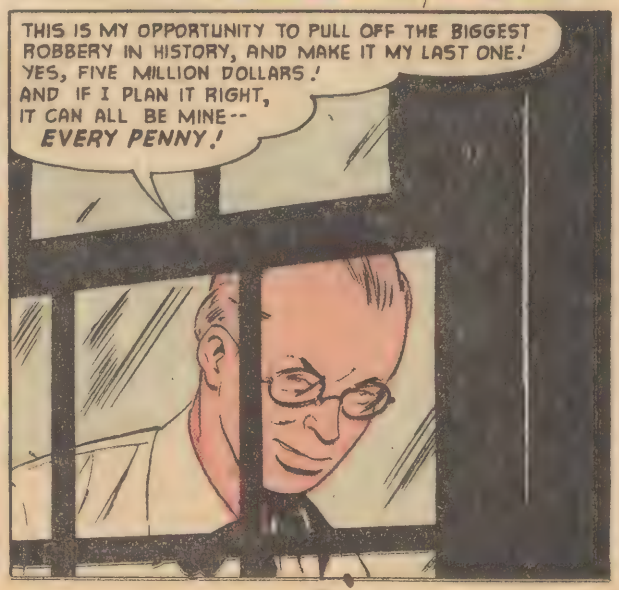
FIVE MILLION!
THE PACIFIC CLEARING HOUSE IS SHIPPING THAT MUCH IN WORN CURRENCY BACK TO THE MINT IN WASHINGTON NEXT MONTH! WE GOT THE TIP FROM GRIFT!

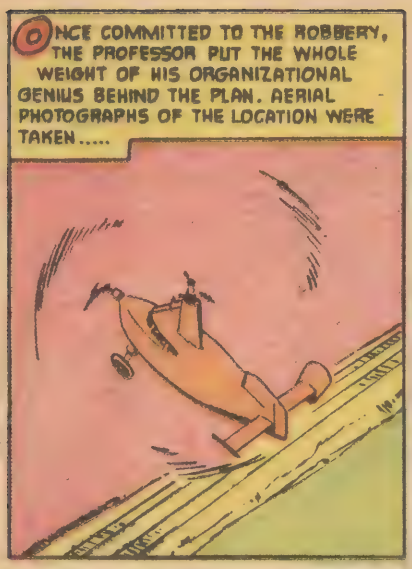

HOW DO I KNOW WE CAN TRUST THE TIP?
GRIFT'S STILL WANTED FOR THE BANK JOB WE GOT SENT UP FOR! WE CAN BLOW THE WHISTLE ON HIM WHENEVER WE WANT, AND GRIFT KNOWS IT! HE WOULDN'T LIE!


ALL RIGHT, BOYS, I'M IN! I'LL NEED A FEW DAYS TO ROUGH OUT A TENTATIVE PLAN! MEANWHILE, PUG WILL GET YOU A SAFE HIDE-OUT! WE'LL MEET HERE AGAIN ON TUESDAY!

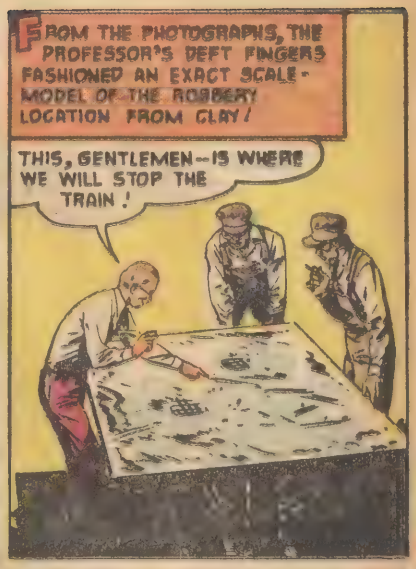

FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS, THE PROFESSOR GATHERED A VAST AMOUNT OF SEEMINGLY UNRELATED INFORMATION ON THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD AND THE WILD COUNTRY SURROUNDING EAGLE ROCK! BUT PRESENTLY, A PICTURE BEGAN TO EMERGE!
THERE'S ONLY ONE ESCAPE ROUTE, THE EAST-WEST HIGHWAY OVER MULE PASS! A POLICE BARRIER THERE-- WOULD TRAP US IN THE VALLEY LIKE RABBITS!


ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE'S THE WHITE HORSE RAILROAD TUNNEL UNDER THE GREAT DIVIDE! FROM THAT POINT--THROUGH THE PASS IS ONLY FORTY MILES! WITH SPLIT-SECOND TIMING AND SOME LUCK...

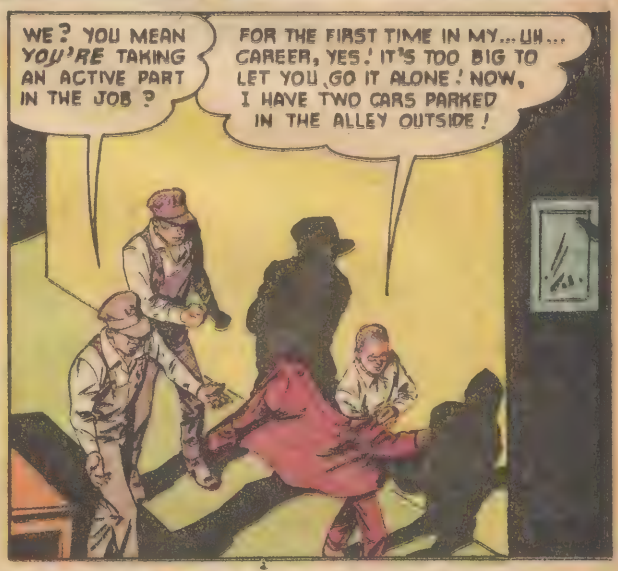

THIS IS MY OPPORTUNITY TO PULL OFF THE BIGGEST ROBBERY IN HISTORY, AND MAKE IT MY LAST ONE! YES, FIVE MILLION DOLLARS! AND IF I PLAN IT RIGHT, IT CAN ALL BE MINE-- EVERY PENNY!


ONCE COMMITTED TO THE ROBBERY, THE PROFESSOR PUT THE WHOLE WEIGHT OF HIS ORGANIZATIONAL GENIUS BEHIND THE PLAN. AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE LOCATION WERE TAKEN.....

...AND DEVELOPED IN HIS OWN DARKROOM.....

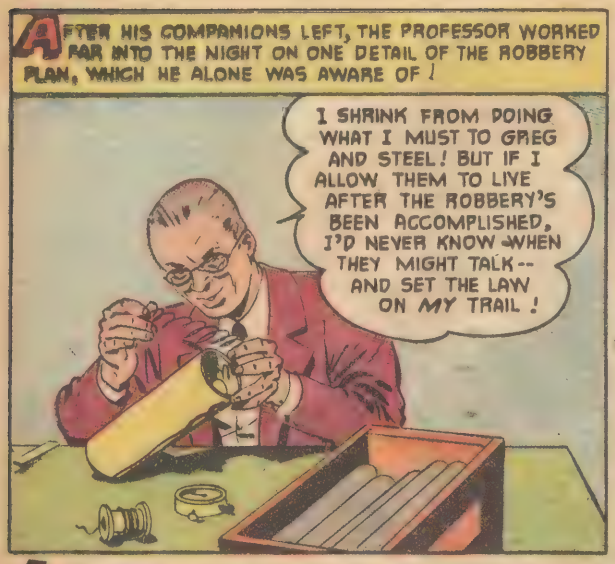

FROM THE PHOTOGRAPHS, THE PROFESSOR'S DEFT FINGERS FASHIONED AN EXACT SCALE-MODEL OF THE ROBBERY LOCATION FROM CLAY!
THIS, GENTLEMEN--IS WHERE WE WILL STOP THE TRAIN!

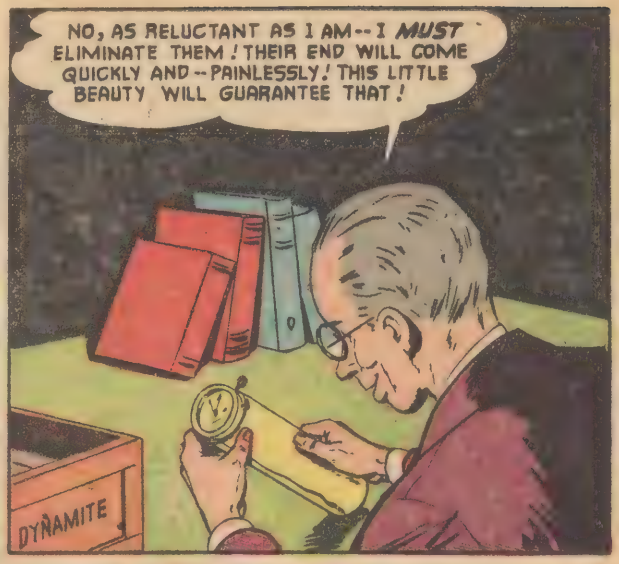
FOR A GUY THAT'S NEVER BEEN WITHIN FIVE HUNDRED MILES OF EAGLE ROCK, YOU SURE HAVE EVERYTHING DOWN PAT!
NO, MY FRIEND! THE *REAL* PLANNING COMES WHEN WE ARRIVE IN EAGLE ROCK!

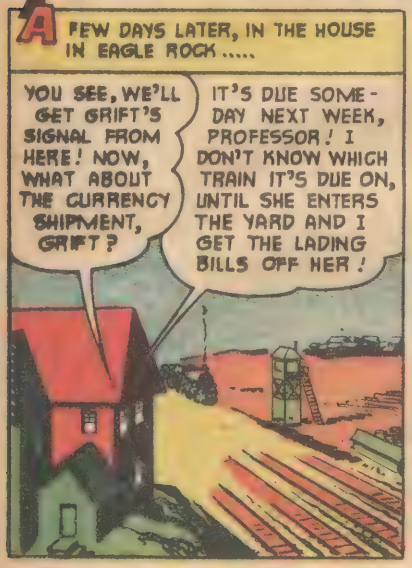

WE? YOU MEAN *YOU'RE* TAKING AN ACTIVE PART IN THE JOB?
FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY...UH... CAREER, YES! IT'S TOO BIG TO LET YOU GO IT ALONE! NOW, I HAVE TWO CARS PARKED IN THE ALLEY OUTSIDE!

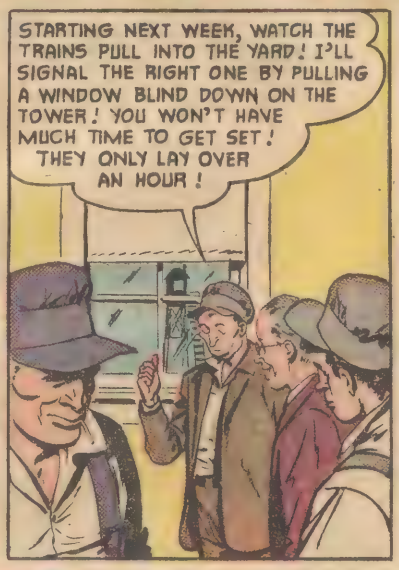
I'VE RENTED A PLACE WITHIN SIGHT OF THE RAILYARD CONTROL TOWER! WE'LL WATCH FOR GRIFT'S SIGNAL THERE! YOU AND GREG WILL TAKE THE GUNS AND EXPLOSIVES IN ONE CAR! I'LL FOLLOW, IN THE OTHER!

HERE'S THE ADDRESS OF THE HOUSE! YOU'LL LEAVE IMMEDIATELY! AS SOON AS I'VE WOUND THINGS UP HERE I'LL FOLLOW--PROBABLY TOMORROW MORNING!
OKAY, PROFESSOR! WE'LL BE SEEING YOU!

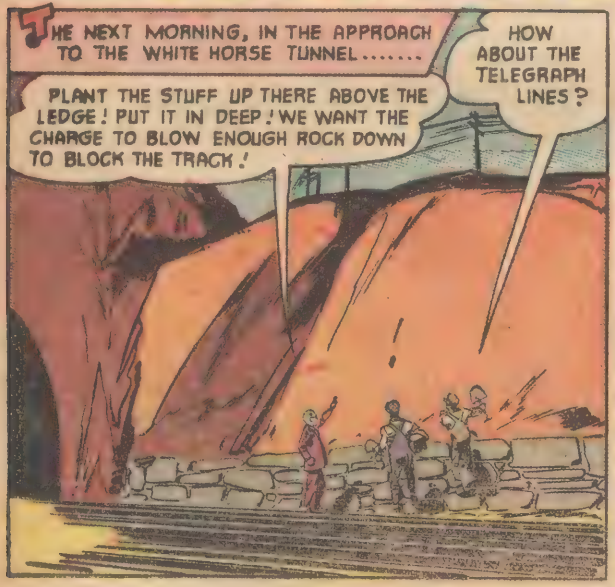

AFTER HIS COMPANIONS LEFT, THE PROFESSOR WORKED FAR INTO THE NIGHT ON ONE DETAIL OF THE ROBBERY PLAN, WHICH HE ALONE WAS AWARE OF!
I SHRINK FROM DOING WHAT I MUST TO GREG AND STEEL! BUT IF I ALLOW THEM TO LIVE AFTER THE ROBBERY'S BEEN ACCOMPLISHED, I'D NEVER KNOW WHEN THEY MIGHT TALK -- AND SET THE LAW ON MY TRAIL!


NO, AS RELUCTANT AS I AM -- I MUST ELIMINATE THEM! THEIR END WILL COME QUICKLY AND -- PAINLESSLY! THIS LITTLE BEAUTY WILL GUARANTEE THAT!
DYNAMITE

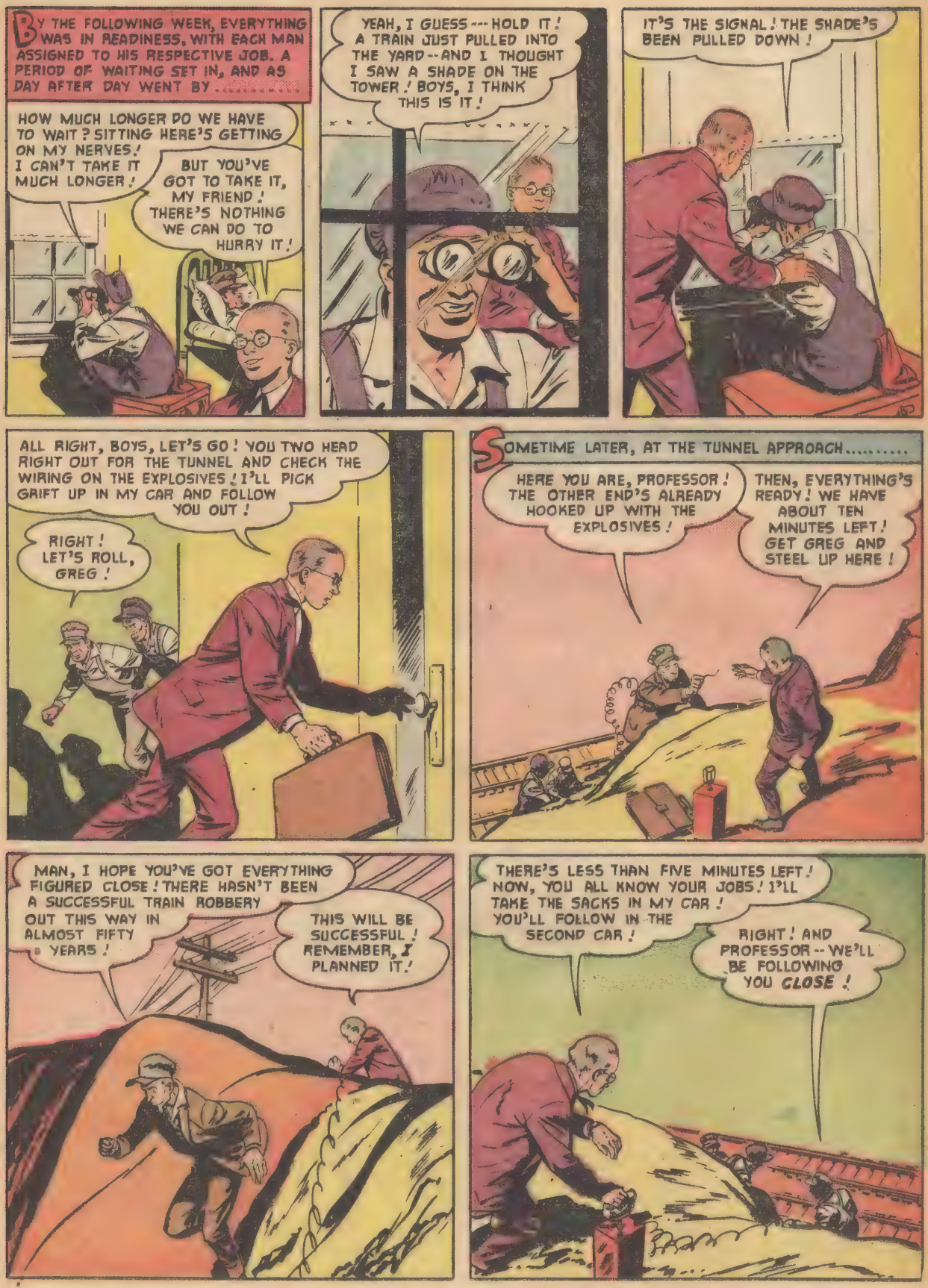

A FEW DAYS LATER, IN THE HOUSE IN EAGLE ROCK.....
YOU SEE, WE'LL GET GRIFT'S SIGNAL FROM HERE! NOW, WHAT ABOUT THE CURRENCY SHIPMENT, GRIFT?
IT'S DUE SOMEDAY NEXT WEEK, PROFESSOR! I DON'T KNOW WHICH TRAIN IT'S DUE ON, UNTIL SHE ENTERS THE YARD AND I GET THE LADING BILLS OFF HER!

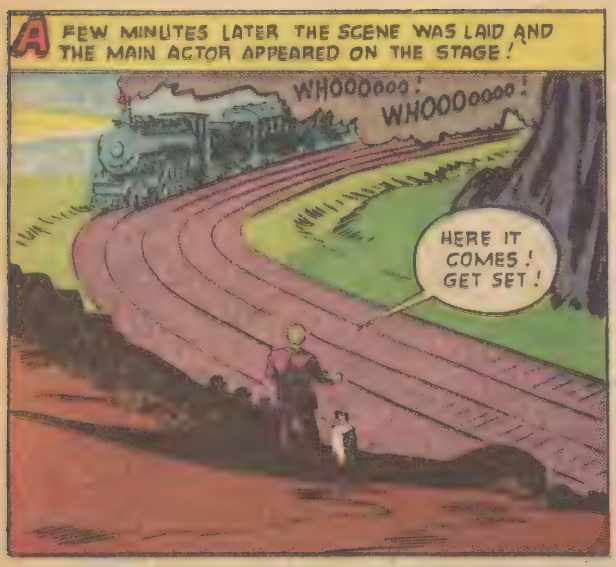

STARTING NEXT WEEK, WATCH THE TRAINS PULL INTO THE YARD! I'LL SIGNAL THE RIGHT ONE BY PULLING A WINDOW BLIND DOWN ON THE TOWER! YOU WON'T HAVE MUCH TIME TO GET SET! THEY ONLY LAY OVER AN HOUR!

AN HOUR? HOW'RE WE GONNA GET TO THE TUNNEL AND MINE THE CUT?
WE'LL TAKE CARE OF THAT BEFOREHAND! TOMORROW, WE'LL PLANT THE EXPLOSIVES AND GO OVER THE ESCAPE ROUTE AND TIME EVERY MILE!

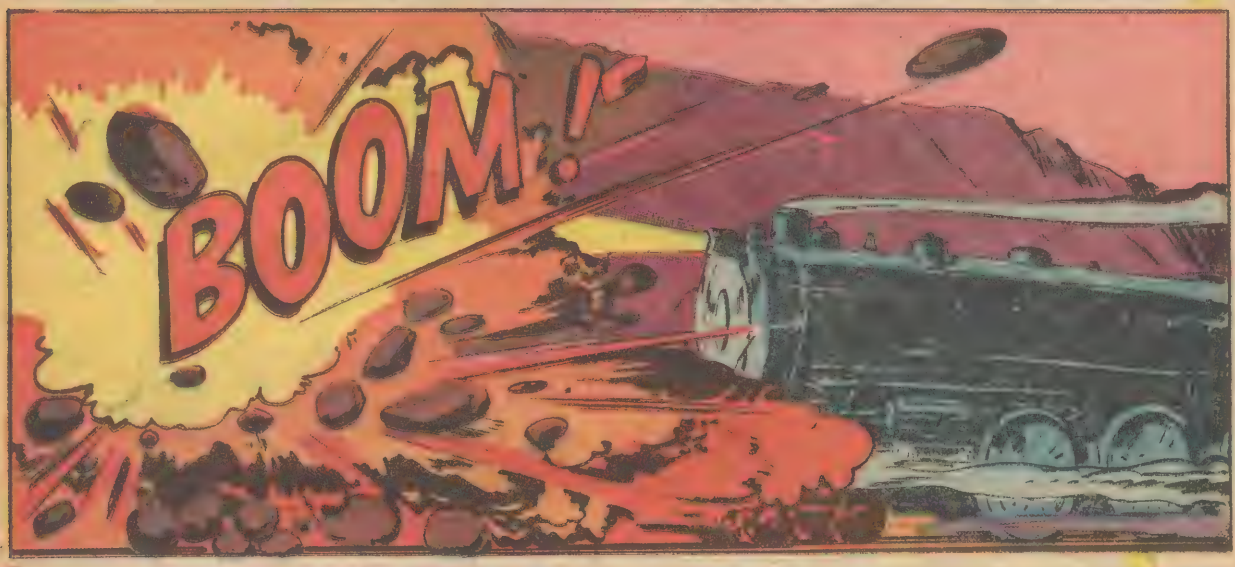

THE NEXT MORNING, IN THE APPROACH TO THE WHITE HORSE TUNNEL.....
PLANT THE STUFF UP THERE ABOVE THE LEDGE! PUT IT IN DEEP! WE WANT THE CHARGE TO BLOW ENOUGH ROCK DOWN TO BLOCK THE TRACK!
HOW ABOUT THE TELEGRAPH LINES?

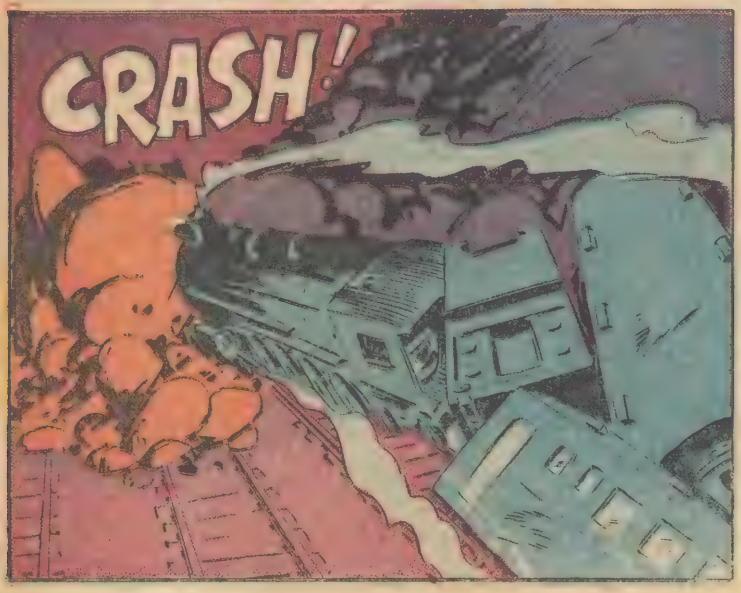
WE'LL CUT THEM A FEW MINUTES BEFORE THE TRAIN COMES! THAT'LL GIVE US AN HOUR START BEFORE THE ALARM GOES OUT! BY THAT TIME, WE'LL BE HALF-WAY THROUGH THE PASS!


BY THE FOLLOWING WEEK, EVERYTHING WAS IN READINESS, WITH EACH MAN ASSIGNED TO HIS RESPECTIVE JOB. A PERIOD OF WAITING SET IN, AND AS DAY AFTER DAY WENT BY.....
HOW MUCH LONGER DO WE HAVE TO WAIT? SITTING HERE'S GETTING ON MY NERVES! I CAN'T TAKE IT MUCH LONGER!
BUT YOU'VE GOT TO TAKE IT, MY FRIEND! THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO TO HURRY IT!
YEAH, I GUESS---HOLD IT! A TRAIN JUST PULLED INTO THE YARD--AND I THOUGHT I SAW A SHADE ON THE TOWER! BOYS, I THINK THIS IS IT!
IT'S THE SIGNAL! THE SHADE'S BEEN PULLED DOWN!
ALL RIGHT, BOYS, LET'S GO! YOU TWO HEAD RIGHT OUT FOR THE TUNNEL AND CHECK THE WIRING ON THE EXPLOSIVES! I'LL PICK GRIFT UP IN MY CAR AND FOLLOW YOU OUT!
RIGHT! LET'S ROLL, GREG!
SOMETIME LATER, AT THE TUNNEL APPROACH.....
HERE YOU ARE, PROFESSOR! THE OTHER END'S ALREADY HOOKED UP WITH THE EXPLOSIVES!
THEN, EVERYTHING'S READY! WE HAVE ABOUT TEN MINUTES LEFT! GET GREG AND STEEL UP HERE!
MAN, I HOPE YOU'VE GOT EVERYTHING FIGURED CLOSE! THERE HASN'T BEEN A SUCCESSFUL TRAIN ROBBERY OUT THIS WAY IN ALMOST FIFTY YEARS!
THIS WILL BE SUCCESSFUL! REMEMBER, I PLANNED IT!
THERE'S LESS THAN FIVE MINUTES LEFT! NOW, YOU ALL KNOW YOUR JOBS! I'LL TAKE THE SACKS IN MY CAR! YOU'LL FOLLOW IN THE SECOND CAR!
RIGHT! AND PROFESSOR--WE'LL BE FOLLOWING YOU CLOSE!

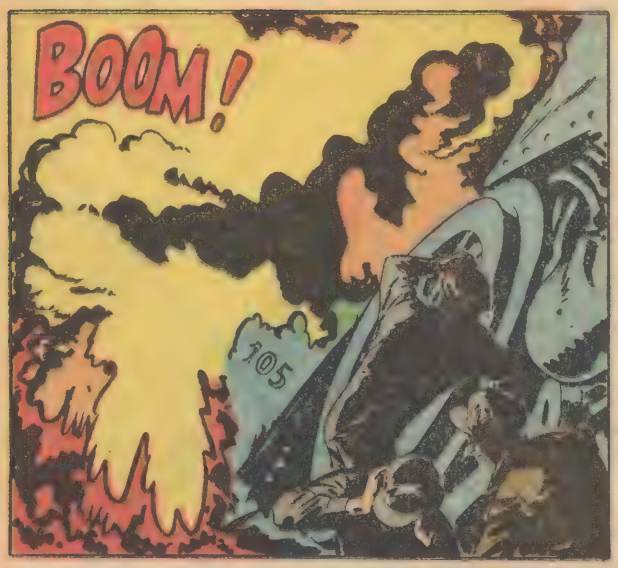

A FEW MINUTES LATER THE SCENE WAS LAID AND THE MAIN ACTOR APPEARED ON THE STAGE!
WHOOOOOO! WHOOOOOOO!
HERE IT COMES! GET SET!

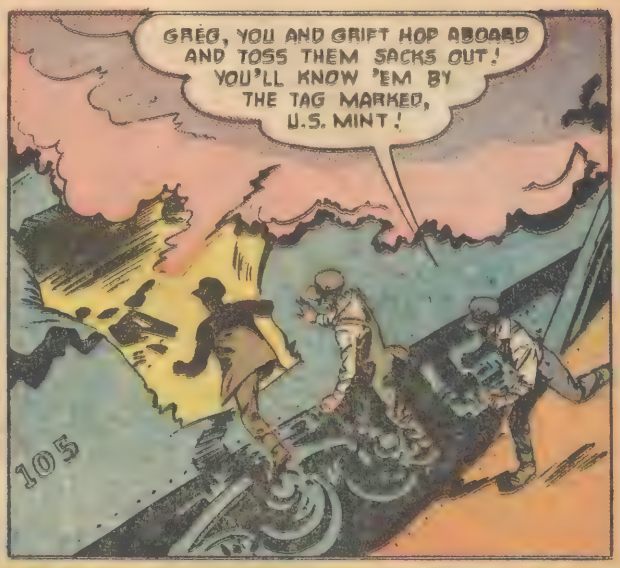
WHOOOOOOO! WHOOOOOO!
NOW-!


BOOM!

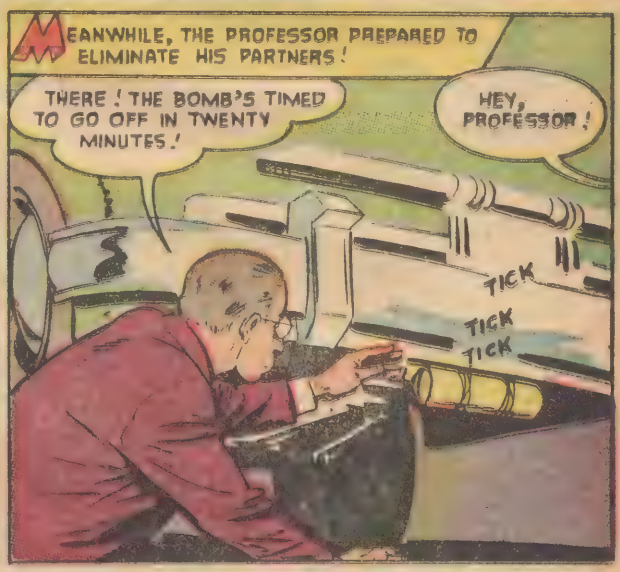

CRASH!

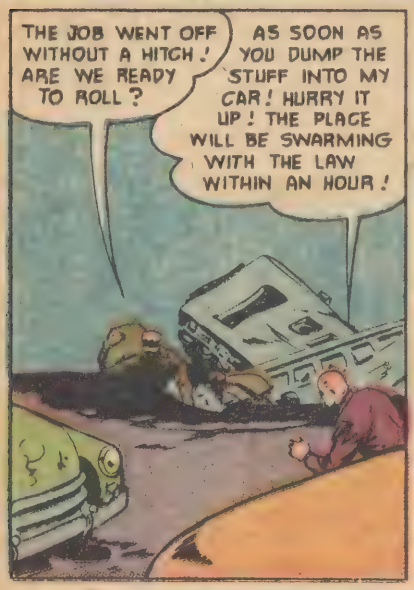
BLOW THE EXPRESS CAR DOOR! IT'S CAR NUMBER 105!

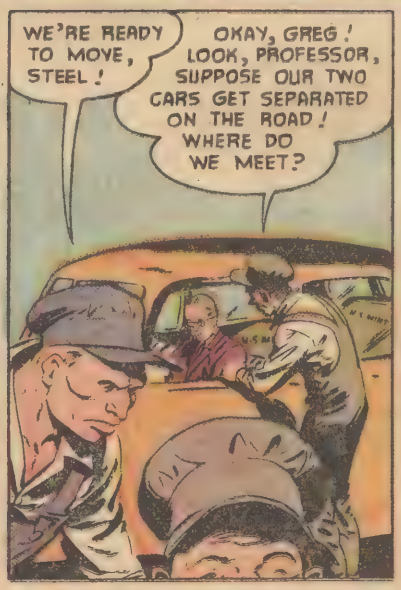

BOOM!
105


GREG, YOU AND GRIFT HOP ABOARD AND TOSS THEM SACKS OUT! YOU'LL KNOW 'EM BY THE TAG MARKED, U.S. MINT!
105

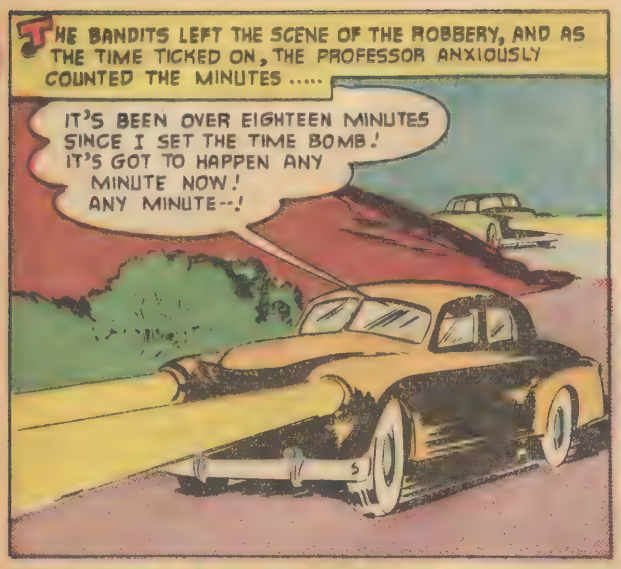
THAT'S THE LAST OF 'EM, STEEL!
OKAY, GET DOWN HERE AND LEND A HAND! WE'LL CARRY THEM UP TO THE CAR!

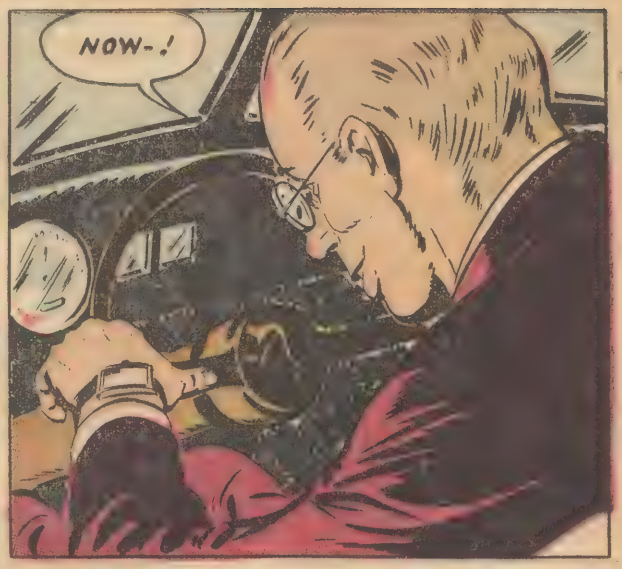

MEANWHILE, THE PROFESSOR PREPARED TO ELIMINATE HIS PARTNERS!
THERE! THE BOMB'S TIMED TO GO OFF IN TWENTY MINUTES!
HEY, PROFESSOR!
TICK
TICK
TICK

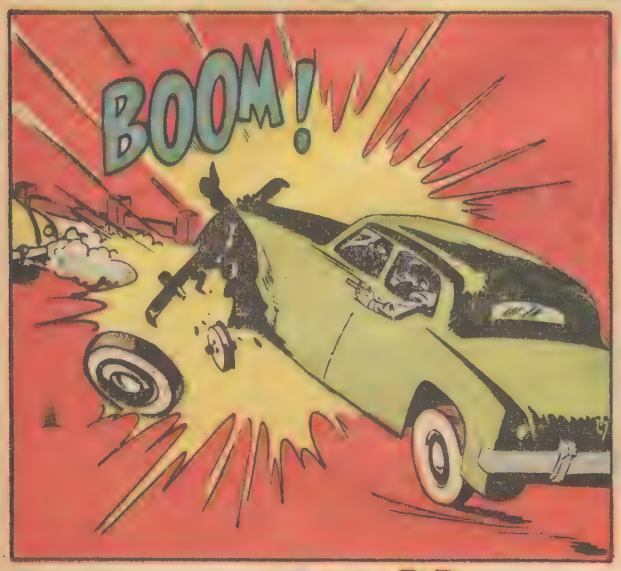

THE JOB WENT OFF WITHOUT A HITCH! ARE WE READY TO ROLL?
AS SOON AS YOU DUMP THE STUFF INTO MY CAR! HURRY IT UP! THE PLACE WILL BE SWARMING WITH THE LAW WITHIN AN HOUR!

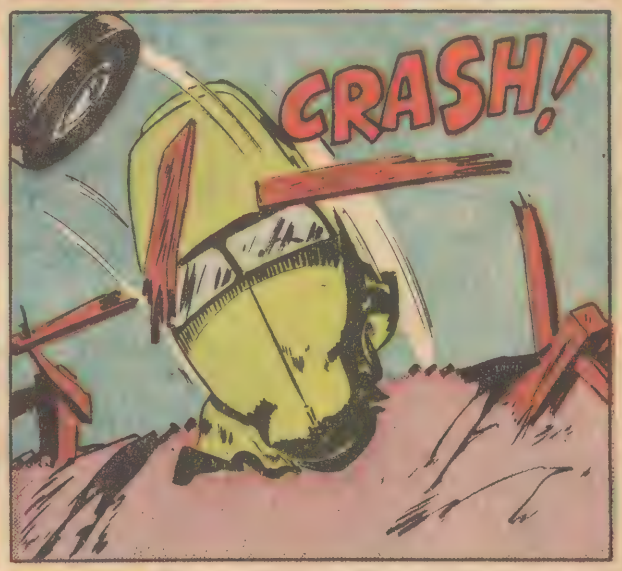

WE'RE READY TO MOVE, STEEL!
OKAY, GREG! LOOK, PROFESSOR, SUPPOSE OUR TWO CARS GET SEPARATED ON THE ROAD! WHERE DO WE MEET?

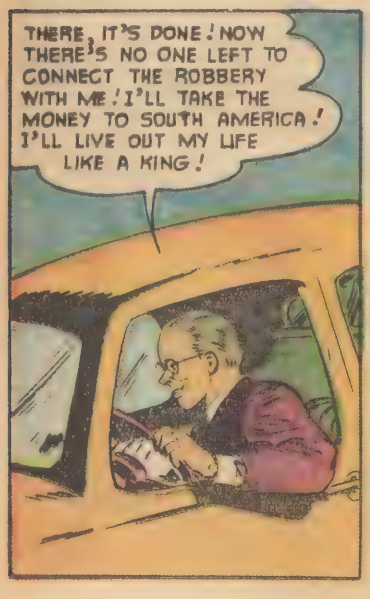
AT MY PLACE IN CHICAGO! BUT DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, STEEL! WE WON'T BECOME SEPARATED!

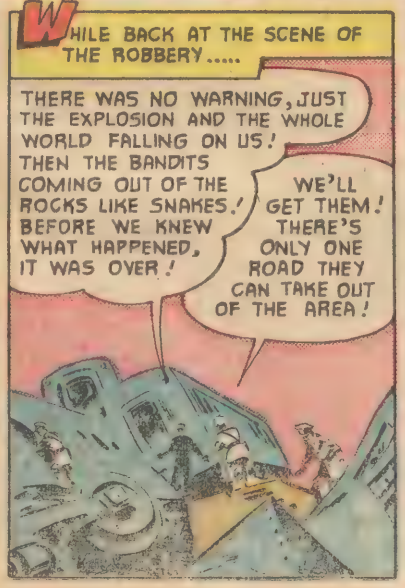

THE BANDITS LEFT THE SCENE OF THE ROBBERY, AND AS THE TIME TICKED ON, THE PROFESSOR ANXIOUSLY COUNTED THE MINUTES .....
IT'S BEEN OVER EIGHTEEN MINUTES SINCE I SET THE TIME BOMB! IT'S GOT TO HAPPEN ANY MINUTE NOW! ANY MINUTE--!


NOW-!


BOOM!

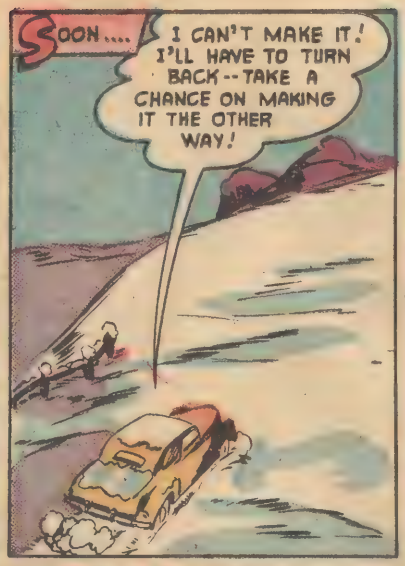

CRASH!


THERE, IT'S DONE! NOW THERE'S NO ONE LEFT TO CONNECT THE ROBBERY WITH ME! I'LL TAKE THE MONEY TO SOUTH AMERICA! I'LL LIVE OUT MY LIFE LIKE A KING!


WHILE BACK AT THE SCENE OF THE ROBBERY.....
THERE WAS NO WARNING, JUST THE EXPLOSION AND THE WHOLE WORLD FALLING ON US! THEN THE BANDITS COMING OUT OF THE ROCKS LIKE SNAKES! BEFORE WE KNEW WHAT HAPPENED, IT WAS OVER!
WE'LL GET THEM! THERE'S ONLY ONE ROAD THEY CAN TAKE OUT OF THE AREA!

ALL RIGHT, BEN, GET THIS OVER THE AIR! TO ALL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES! TRAIN ROBBERY AT WHITE HORSE TUNNEL! BLOCK EAST-WEST HIGHWAY, PUT ALL AVAILABLE SEARCH PLANES IN AIR, AND....

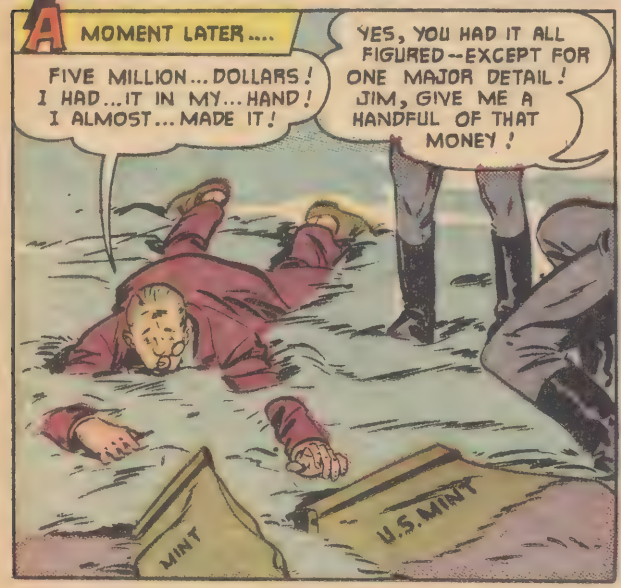
MEANWHILE, IN MULE PASS.....
TEN MINUTES MORE AND I'LL BE THROUGH THE PASS AND HAVE A HUNDRED ROADS TO CHOOSE FROM! WHAT'S THAT? IT'S SNOW! IT'S SNOW IN APRIL!


SOON....
I CAN'T MAKE IT! I'LL HAVE TO TURN BACK--TAKE A CHANCE ON MAKING IT THE OTHER WAY!

BUT BACK THE OTHER WAY WAS.....
THE POLICE! I'LL HAVE TO ABANDON THE CAR AND TAKE TO THE WOODS!

THAT'S ONE OF THEM!
HALT!
POLICE

GET HIM BEFORE HE REACHES THE WOODS!
CRACK!


A MOMENT LATER....
FIVE MILLION...DOLLARS! I HAD...IT IN MY...HAND! I ALMOST...MADE IT!
YES, YOU HAD IT ALL FIGURED--EXCEPT FOR ONE MAJOR DETAIL! JIM, GIVE ME A HANDFUL OF THAT MONEY!
MINT
U.S. MINT

CUT! CUT! I DON'T--BELIEVE--IT....
YES, CUT IN HALF AND--WORTHLESS! DON'T YOU KNOW THAT MONEY SHIPPED BACK TO THE MINT FOR DESTRUCTION--IS ALWAYS SHIPPED THAT WAY OR--DIDN'T YOU---FIGURE IT?

# PHOTO FINISH

*By Dick Kraus*

WALKING out of the little photo shop on Christopher and Pine, Patrolman First Class Michael O'Day smiled happily as he thrust an envelope of developed prints into his coat pocket. It was six o'clock on a balmy evening, and Officer O'Day was in plain clothes, on his way to have dinner at the home of his girl friend, Betty Taylor. The young policeman began to hum gayly as he walked down the street. Turning a corner, he patted the envelope of photographs he had in his pocket. They were pictures taken at a picnic he had enjoyed with Betty the last week-end. Tonight they'd be able to look at the pictures and laugh at the memory of ants getting into the angel cake, and of him diving into the lake—still wearing his wrist watch!

Michael O'Day shook his head, chuckling at the thought.

"Lucky it was waterproof," he mused. Then he turned in the driveway of the trim brick house, his heels clicking on the concrete.

Suddenly his brow furrowed. Were his ears playing tricks on him? He seemed to hear someone walking just behind him! There was an unmistakable scraping sound—a rustling noise!! Michael O'Day tensed and began to whirl about . . . but he was too late! A heavy blackjack hurtled down through the air and slammed, with stunning force, against the back of his head. The young policeman felt a wave of pain wash through him—and then, suddenly, no feeling at all. He sank forward quietly, against the front door, and lay there, quite still.

Fifteen minutes later, Betty, being worried, went to the door and began to open it. Seeing Michael lying there, she screamed. Then, being a policeman's future wife, she forced herself to be practical. Running for a pitcher of water, she poured it over his head.

Michael came to promptly. He sat up, rubbing the lump on the back of his head. Then, suddenly, he patted his pockets.

"Watch still there," he said slowly. "Wallet and billfold okay. Reckon they didn't take anything." Suddenly his expression changed and he stood up. "But they did. The photos! They're missing!"

"What photos?" Betty asked. "What is this all about?"

"I don't know," the young patrolman said. "Somebody slugged me as I was coming up the walk—and all he took was the envelope of pictures we took at the picnic last week-end."

He turned abruptly.

"Sorry about dinner, Betty," he said, "but I can't stay. I'm going back to headquarters. I think Gus will want to hear about this!"

Chief of Police Augustus Schmidt, known to all as Gus, sat back in his big swivel chair. He smiled fondly at Michael O'Day. A rookie cop—nice, but a little dumb sometimes.

"I see you got a lump, Mike," he said. "So it isn't imagination. And so maybe someone did take your photographs. Some crackpot. But why come to me? Next time, just keep looking behind you!" Again he smiled. "Okay?"

"No!" replied Michael O'Day, leaning forward. "I got a hunch, or I wouldn't have bothered you, Chief, for the last two months, someone's been distributing narcotics in this town! Right? A lot of poor fools have fallen victim to this rat—and have started ruining their lives! You've caught one or two of the peddlers—but not the big boy! Right?"

Gus Schmidt nodded. "Right. And when I get him, I'll send him up. What has that got to do with—"

"Plenty!" Patrolman O'Day broke in. "A photo shop like this would be a perfect place to handle the stuff. People come in and out all day, and walk away with little envelopes. Who'd get wise? I've got a hunch that maybe they slipped me the wrong envelope by mistake. Then realizing it, they came after me and got it back—fast." He hesitated. "Look! The dope racket started in this town about two months ago! Let's see how long that store's been in operation. If the two dates jibe . . ."

Chief of Police Schmidt picked up the telephone.

"Commisisoner of Licenses," he said softly. He talked into the phone for a few moments. Then he put it down and looked up. For the first time excitement blazed in his eyes.

"Michael, boy," he said, "I think you've got something. That photo shop on Christopher and Pine opened up nine weeks ago. A week later—we began to round up drug distributors. It's too close for coincidence." He smiled. "Son, you've got yourself a job. I'm putting you and a half-dozen other detectives and policemen on this assignment. Keep your eye on that store. See who goes in and goes out. Shadow them. And when the first big delivery is made—hit them fast and grab them. Get it?"

Michael O'Day rose, his face eager. The lump on the back of his head was forgotten. He had a job to do.

"I got it, G-Gus," he stammered. "I m-mean, Chief."

"Gus is okay," the chief said. "Now go ahead."

For five nights they watched the little photo shop. Lookouts were stationed in an apartment building across the street, and in a truck parked down the road. Michael O'Day was in the truck, with a plainclothes policeman and, occasionally, Chief of Police Augustus Schmidt. On the sixth night, the police head came in again, to find out what progress was being made.

"We've spotted several runners going in and out," Patrolman O'Day reported. "We recognized them from the list of suspects at headquarters . . . but we haven't picked them up. Instead, we've had them tailed. So far, they've led us nowhere. And we've been waiting for a delivery. According to your orders, that's when we crack down!"

"Check!" the police chief nodded. "That's the only time—"

He broke off as a small delivery truck pulled up next to the photo store. Then he relaxed. "Nothing," he said. "Sign on the side of the truck says "Fluorescent Light Service." There goes a messenger in with some packages. Probably replacing the fluorescent light tubes in the store . . ."

"Oh, yeah?" muttered Michael O'Day. "With them using regular electric lights in the store? I've *been* in there! That truck's a blind! Let's go!"

At his words, the other plainclothesman pressed the horn of the police truck three times. It was the agreed-on signal.

Patrolman O'Day lunged from the truck, gun in hand, with the police chief right behind him. Together they ran toward the store. At the same moment, three policemen and detectives sprang from the apartment house across the street, drawing their service revolvers. The messenger was about to enter the photo shop when he saw what was happening.

Turning quickly, he dashed back to the truck, shouting to the driver, "It's a trap! Gun the motor!"

But, even as he spoke, the policeman in the truck up the street slammed his clutch down, shot his car into gear, and careened down the street, blocking the way. In a matter of seconds, when the drug messenger attempted to bolt from the truck, he found three revolvers pointing at him. Slowly, his hands rose. At the same time, Michael O'Day and Gus Schmidt forced their way into the photo store. Quickly, they stood the proprietor and a husky clerk against the wall and searched them. That search—and an examination of the packages that the messenger had been bringing in—revealed some very interesting contents.

When it was over, four guns and several pounds of heroin and cocaine lay on the counter of the store.

The proof had been collected, and the man who could lead the police to the nerve center of the gang—the messenger—had been captured. It was a good night's work. Chief of Police Gus Schmidt mopped his shining forehead and turned to young Michael O'Day.

"MIKE," he said, "your guess was right the first time. The gang probably set up this store as a distributing center for dope peddlers. If they hadn't given you that envelope containing dope by mistake—and then slugged you on the bean to get it back—we might still be looking for them. Good work, kid!" Then he stopped. "Why so worried-looking, son? You've just won yourself a promotion, and here you look as if the heavens fell in. What's the trouble?"

"I-I got to go!" Michael O'Day said. "I haven't seen my girl for six nights now—and she told me that if I didn't come over tonight, it would be all over between us! G-Goodbye, chief!"

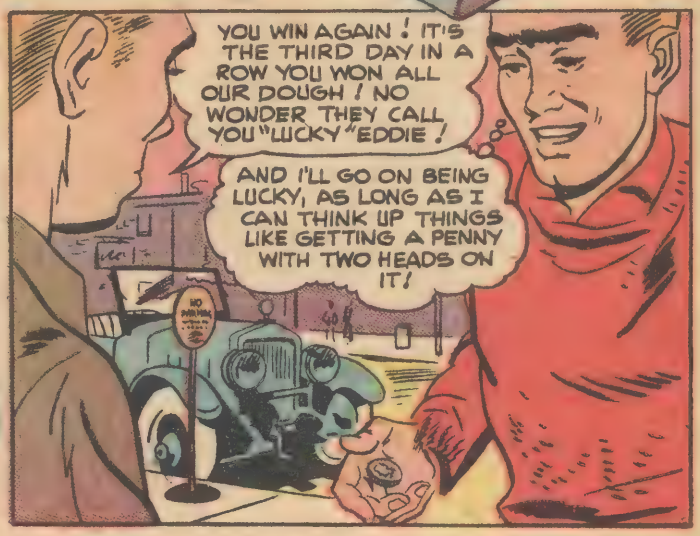
Still holding his gun, he ran out of the store and up the street.

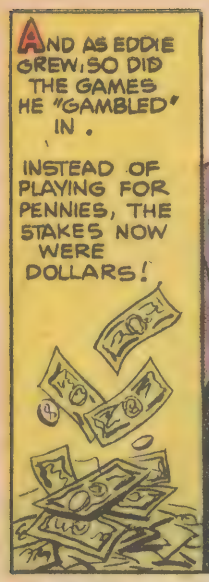
THE END

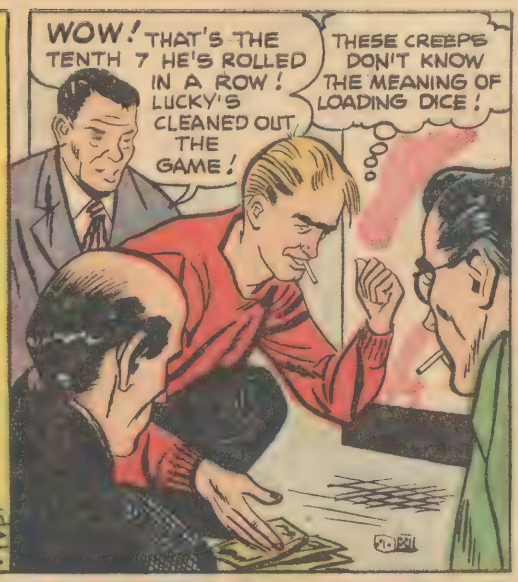
# BORN LUCKY!

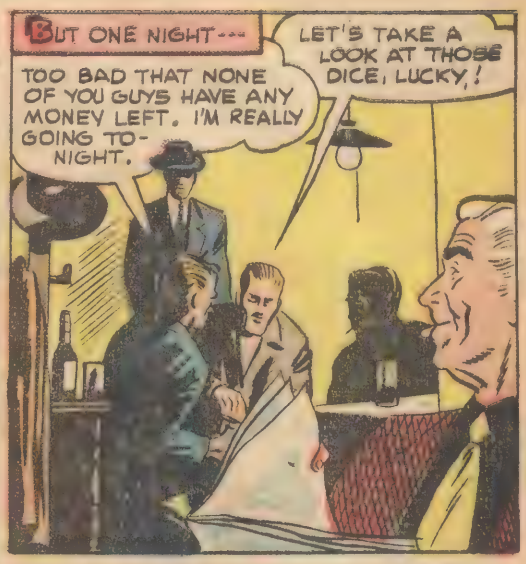
THIS IS THE TRUE STORY OF EDDIE "LUCKY" LANG, A GAMBLER WHO NEVER BELIEVED IN TAKING A CHANCE. BORN IN THE SAN FRANCISCO SLUMS, HE LEARNED, AT A VERY EARLY AGE, THE SLUM PHILOSOPHY: TO GET ALONG, YOU HAVE TO BE TOUGHER THAN THE NEXT GUY! AND IF YOU CAN'T BE TOUGHER---YOU HAVE TO BE SMARTER!

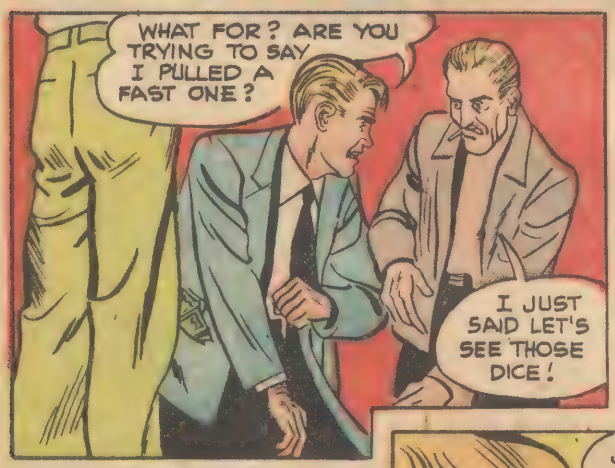
GAMBLING WAS THE NATURAL PASTTIME FOR KIDS BROUGHT UP IN THE SAN FRANCISCO SLUMS BACK IN 1920.

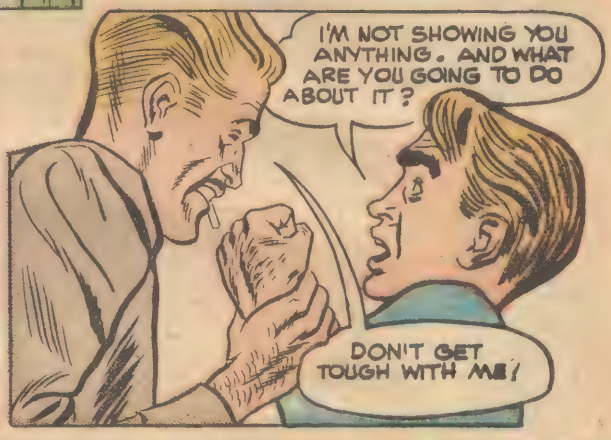



AND AS EDDIE GREW, SO DID THE GAMES HE "GAMBLED" IN.
INSTEAD OF PLAYING FOR PENNIES, THE STAKES NOW WERE DOLLARS!


WOW! THAT'S THE TENTH 7 HE'S ROLLED IN A ROW! LUCKY'S CLEANED OUT THE GAME!
THESE CREEPS DON'T KNOW THE MEANING OF LOADING DICE!


BUT ONE NIGHT---
TOO BAD THAT NONE OF YOU GUYS HAVE ANY MONEY LEFT. I'M REALLY GOING TO-NIGHT.
LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT THOSE DICE, LUCKY!

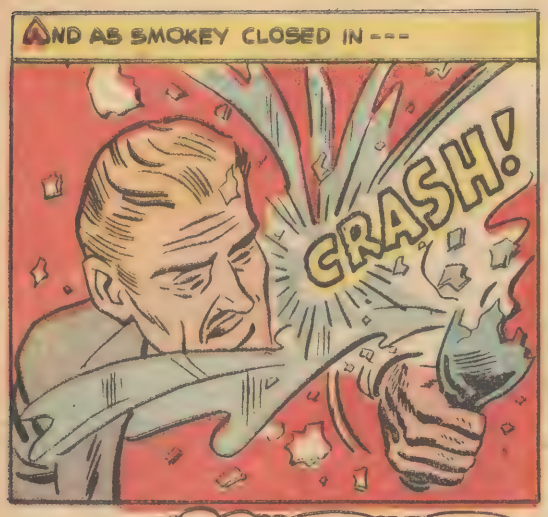

WHAT FOR? ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY I PULLED A FAST ONE?
I JUST SAID LET'S SEE THOSE DICE!


I'M NOT SHOWING YOU ANYTHING. AND WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?
DON'T GET TOUGH WITH ME!

I WANT TO SEE THOSE DICE, AND I'M GOING TO!
--OW!

JUST AS I FIGURED-- LOADED!

FIRST, I'M GONNA TAKE OUR DOUGH BACK-- THEN I'M GONNA BREAK EVERY BONE IN YOUR BODY.
I WARN YOU---- STAND BACK!


AND AS SMOKEY CLOSED IN---
CRASH!

THE FIRST GUY TO GET BETWEEN ME AND THAT DOOR GETS THIS BROKEN BOTTLE FLUSH IN HIS KISSER!

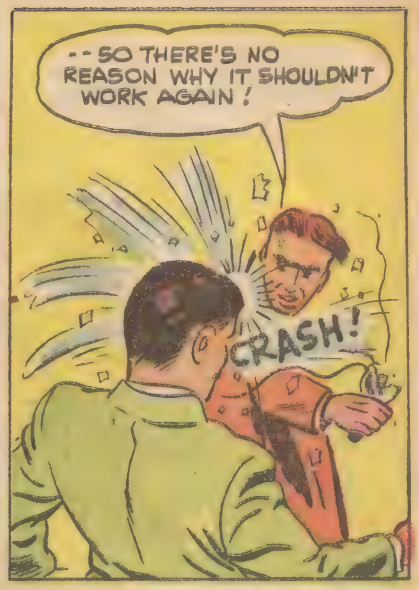
THIS TOWN'S GOING TO BE MIGHTY HOT FOR ME! I'D BETTER BLOW!

A FEW DAYS LATER, SMOKEY DIED FROM THE BLOW ON HIS HEAD, AND THE POLICE STARTED TO SEARCH SAN FRANCISCO FOR THE MURDERER. BUT BY THIS TIME "LUCKY" EDDIE WAS IN TEXAS WITH THE NEW LOOK!
NOBODY WILL EVER RECOGNIZE ME WITH THIS RED HAIR!

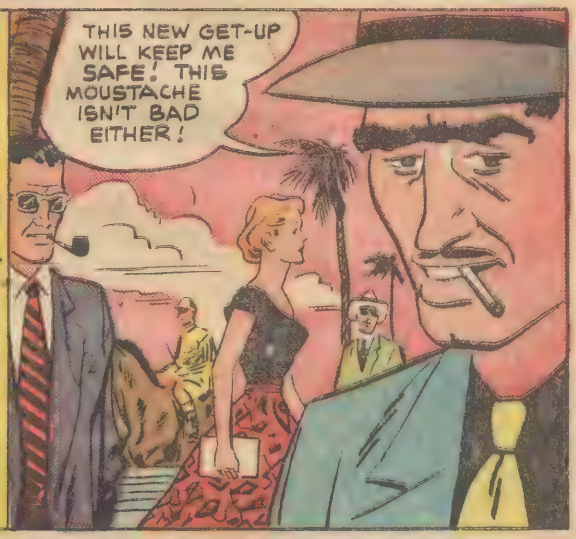
SURE NICE OF YOU GENTLEMEN TO INVITE ME TO JOIN YOUR GAME.
DON'T MENTION IT, SON. WHAT HAVE YOU GOT THIS TIME?

4 ACES!
I RECKON THAT BUSTS UP THE GAME. WE'RE ALL CLEANED OUT. YOU SURE ARE THE LUCKIEST GAMBLER WE ALL EVER MET!

BUT AS EDDIE REACHED FOR HIS MONEY--
HOLD ON--- WHAT'S THAT?

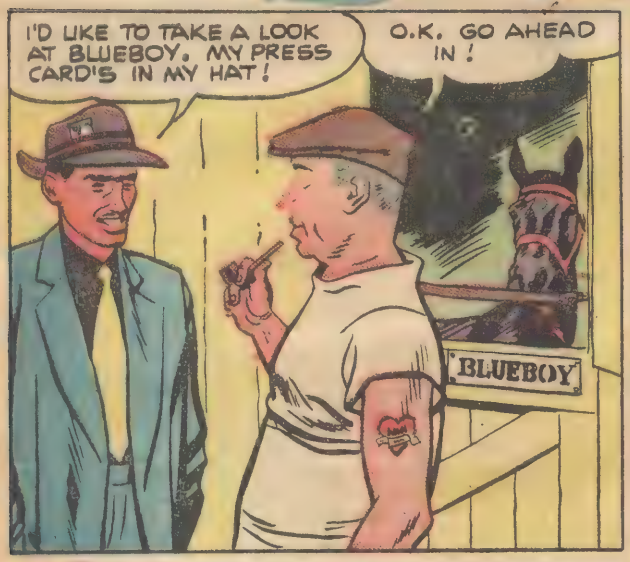


"LUCKY" EDDIE GOT AWAY ALL RIGHT, BUT A FEW DAYS LATER, HIS VICTIM DIED OF A BRAIN CONCUSSION. THE SIMILARITY OF THIS CASE ATTRACTED THE ATTENTION OF THE F.B.I. AND THEY TOOK ON THE CASE. BUT BY NOW "LUCKY" EDDIE WAS IN FLORIDA.

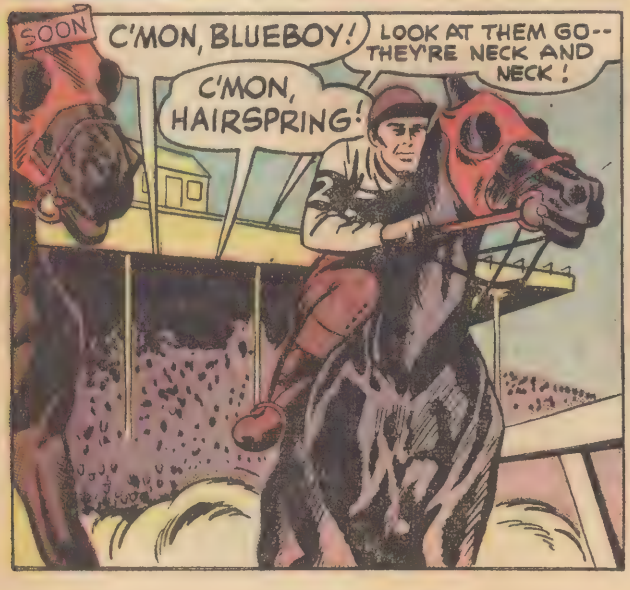


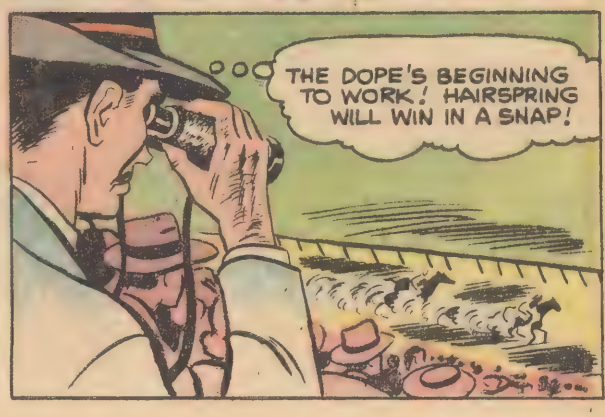
A GUY'S A SUCKER TO TAKE A CHANCE, IF HE CAN HAVE A SURE THING!

ALL I GOT TO DO IS MAKE SURE ONE CAN'T WIN AND BET ALL MY DOUGH ON THE OTHER!
PRESS


I'D LIKE TO TAKE A LOOK AT BLUEBOY. MY PRESS CARD'S IN MY HAT!
O.K. GO AHEAD IN!
BLUEBOY

THIS SHOT OF DOPE WILL SLOW BLUEBOY DOWN TO A WALK. NOW I'LL BET ALL MY DOUGH ON HAIRSPRING AND MAKE A KILLING!

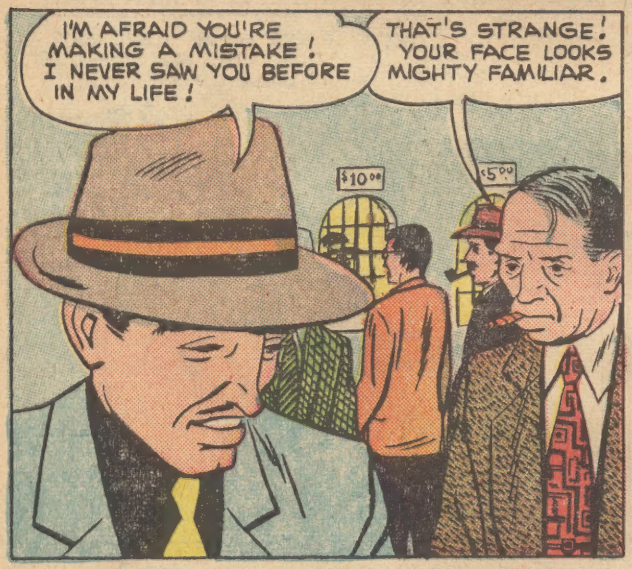

SOON
C'MON, BLUEBOY!
LOOK AT THEM GO-- THEY'RE NECK AND NECK!
C'MON, HAIRSPRING!


THE DOPE'S BEGINNING TO WORK! HAIRSPRING WILL WIN IN A SNAP!

HAIRSPRING WINS!
NOW TO COLLECT MY WINNINGS! BOY, I SURE AM A LUCKY GAMBLER.

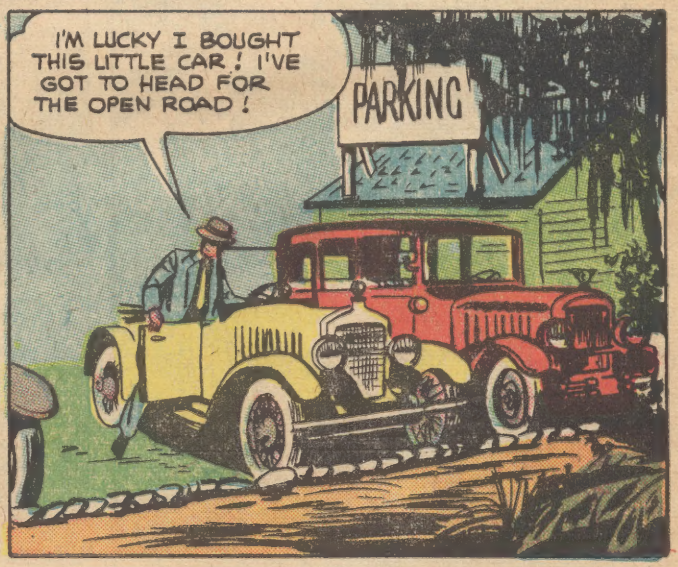
BUT AS "LUCKY" EDDIE LEFT THE PAYING WINDOW--
OH, EXCUSE ME, DON'T I KNOW YOU FROM SOMEWHERE?

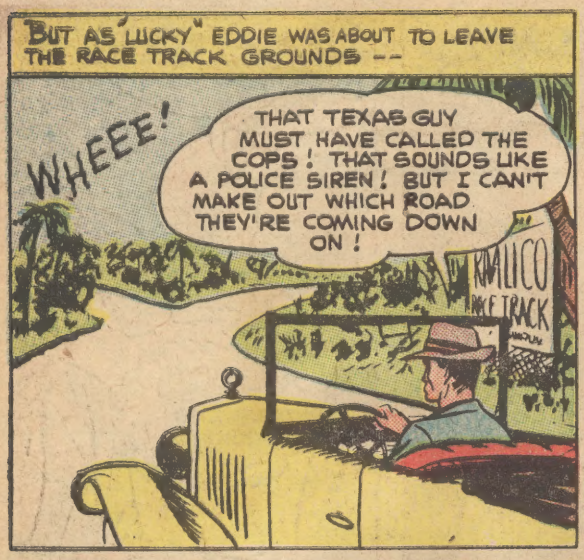
MY NAME'S SLADE. I'M JUST DOWN FROM TEXAS FOR THE RACES!
IT'S ONE OF THOSE GUYS WHO CAUGHT ME CHEATING!


I'M AFRAID YOU'RE MAKING A MISTAKE! I NEVER SAW YOU BEFORE IN MY LIFE!
THAT'S STRANGE! YOUR FACE LOOKS MIGHTY FAMILIAR.
$10.00
$5.00

NOW I REMEMBER WHERE I SAW HIM ---- THAT MOUSTACHE AND DYED HAIR ALMOST FOOLED ME!

STOP THAT MAN! HE'S A MURDERER!
PARKING LOT

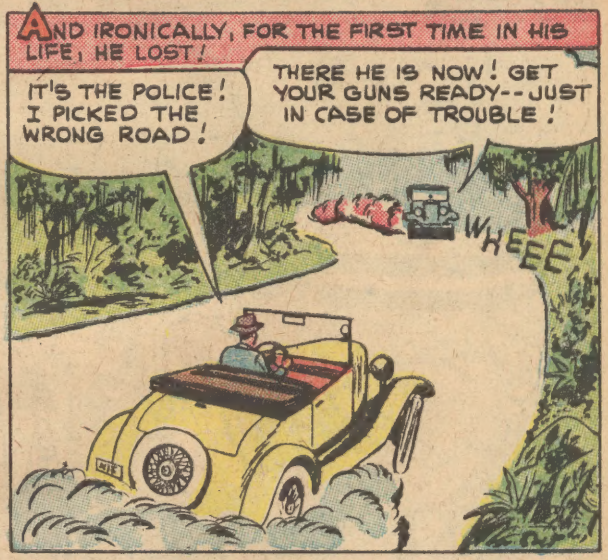

I'M LUCKY I BOUGHT THIS LITTLE CAR! I'VE GOT TO HEAD FOR THE OPEN ROAD!
PARKING


BUT AS "LUCKY" EDDIE WAS ABOUT TO LEAVE THE RACE TRACK GROUNDS --
WHEEE!
THAT TEXAS GUY MUST HAVE CALLED THE COPS! THAT SOUNDS LIKE A POLICE SIREN! BUT I CAN'T MAKE OUT WHICH ROAD THEY'RE COMING DOWN ON!
KIMLICO RACE TRACK

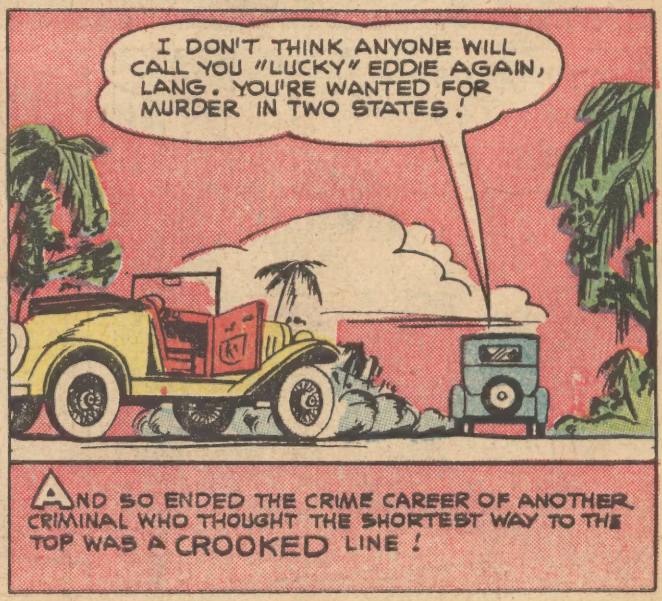
WELL, I CAN'T JUST SIT HERE. I'LL HAVE TO GAMBLE ON WHICH ROAD TO TAKE. HEADS I GO TO THE LEFT! TAILS TO THE RIGHT.

TAILS...

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS LIFE, "LUCKY" EDDIE HAD BEEN FORCED INTO MAKING AN HONEST GAMBLE!
--I GO TO THE RIGHT!


AND IRONICALLY, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS LIFE, HE LOST!
IT'S THE POLICE! I PICKED THE WRONG ROAD!
THERE HE IS NOW! GET YOUR GUNS READY--JUST IN CASE OF TROUBLE!
WHEEE

DON'T SHOOT! I'LL GO ALONG WITH YOU!


I DON'T THINK ANYONE WILL CALL YOU "LUCKY" EDDIE AGAIN, LANG. YOU'RE WANTED FOR MURDER IN TWO STATES!
AND SO ENDED THE CRIME CAREER OF ANOTHER CRIMINAL WHO THOUGHT THE SHORTEST WAY TO THE TOP WAS A CROOKED LINE!

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